This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

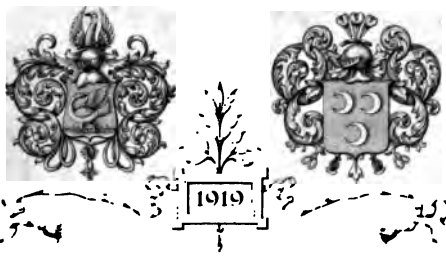
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

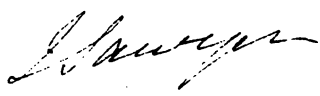
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



GANSEVOORT-LANSING COLLECTION

given to the New York Public Library
Astor Lenox and Tilden Foundations
BY VICTOR HUGO PALTSITS
under the terms of the last will and testament of
CATHERINE GANSEVOORT LANSING
granddaughter of
General Peter Gansevoort, junior
and widow of the
Honorable Abraham Lansing
of Albany, New York



Chaucer
Canterbury
Lipscomb
NC

THE CANTERBURY TALES OF CHAUCER;

COMPLETED IN A MODERN VERSION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Chaucer, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers.....His legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, through each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying.

AKENSIDE.

OXFORD:
Printed for J. COOKE;
And G. G. and J. ROBINSON, Paternoſter Row, London.
MDCCXCV.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
48928A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1922 L

CONTENTS

OF

VOL. III.

	Page
PROLOGUE to the Squire's Tale, by the Rev. WILLIAM LIPSCOMB -	1
Cambuſcan: or, the Squire's Tale, } *by Mr.* BOYSE - -	3
The following are by the Rev. WILLIAM LIPSCOMB.	
Prologue to the Franklein's Tale - -	106
The Franklein's Tale - - - -	109
Prologue to the Doctor's Tale - - -	141
The Doctor's Tale - - - -	142
Prologue to the Pardoner's Tale - -	152
The Pardoner's Tale - - - -	154
Prologue to the Shipman's Tale - - -	179
The Shipman's Tale - - - -	181
Prologue to the Prioreſs's Tale - - -	194
The Prioreſs's Tale - - - -	195
Prologue to Sir Thopas - - -	204

The

The Rhime of Sir Thopas - - - 205
Prologue to Melibeus - - - - 214
The Tale of Melibeus - - - - 216
Prologue to the Monk's Tale - - - 282
The Monk's Tale - - - - 287
Prologue to the Nun's Prieſt's Tale - - 314
The Nun's Prieſt's Tale - - - 316
The Second Nun's Tale - - - - 337
Prologue to the Canon's Yeoman's Tale - 353
The Canon's Yeoman's Tale - - - 358
Prologue to the Manciple's Tale - - 379
The Manciple's Tale - - - - 383

CANTERBURY TALES.

PROLOGUE

TO THE

SQUIRE'S TALE.

HEAVEN, ſays our Hoſt, theſe cunning ſhrews amend,
nd from ſuch wives our peaceful days defend!
ot for myſelf this ardent prayer I pour;
he gods my doom have ſeal'd, they can no more;
for my ſins, have long been amply curſt,
or of all wives mine is, I'm ſure, the worſt:
ul's largeſt bell, though ne'er ſo ſtoutly rung,
but ſoft muſic to her brawling tongue.
all her vices I ſhould ſtrive to tell,
r but on half her well-known gifts ſhould dwell,

On my unfiniſh'd toil the day would fail,
And my long liſt would ſtop each livelier tale.
Pardon my warmth; but when I chance to hear
A wife but nam'd, mine vibrates in my ear;
And though I know complaints and ſighs are vain,
And though my tongue I labour to reſtrain,
Still ſpeak, I find, I muſt, to eaſe my pain.
Paſs we the ſubject now, the gentle Squire
Gladly, I know, will yield to our deſire,
And with ſome feat of arms, or tale of love
The fitneſs of my choice will clearly prove.
By me, ſir Hoſt, bluſhing the Squire replied,
Requeſt ſo flattering ne'er may be denied.
Pardon, my friends, if aught I ſpeak amiſs:
My will is good, and lo! my tale is this.

CAMBUSCAN:

OR, THE

SQUIRE'S TALE.

I.

WHERE peopled Scythia's verdant plains extend,
Eaſt in that ſea, in whoſe unfathom'd flood
Long-winding Volga's rapid ſtreams deſcend,
On Oxus' bank an ancient city ſtood;
Then Sarra, but to later ages known
By riſing Samarcand's imperial name:
There held a potent prince his honour'd throne,
And diſtant nations own'd Cambuſcan's fame:
So was the Sultan call'd, whoſe lengthen'd ſway
Surrounding realms revere, and pleas'd his own obey.

II.

When nervous youth had brac'd his valiant breaſt,
Oft had the Ruſſian felt his dreadful arm;
The Perſian oft his martial pow'r careſs'd,
And the wild Coſſack ſhrunk at his alarm;

Strict to the law th' Arabian prophet taught,
Compaſſionately juſt, and greatly kind,
His virtue ſcarce was ſhaded with a fault,
True was his league and conſtant as his mind:
Great wealth he had, but well that wealth enjoy'd,
And pow'r, heaven's nobleſt gift, as nobly he employ'd.

III.

To raiſe the honours of his ſpotleſs ſtate,
(A joy too ſeldom known in regal life!)
Fortune had bleſs'd him with an equal mate,
And giv'n the fair Eltheta to his wife:
The graceful queen, majeſtic to the view,
Whoſe blooming youth had bleſs'd the hero's arms,
Her high deſcent from great Arſaces drew,
And native dignity adorn'd her charms;
Two manly ſons their faithful union bound,
And one unblemiſh'd maid with ev'ry virtue crown'd.

IV.

Algarſife firſt who grac'd his youthful bed,
Breath'd all the victor's irreſiſtleſs flame;
In camps beneath his father's conduct bred,
His warrior boſom ſwell'd for endleſs fame;
Well practis'd he the daring troops to head,
Bold to attack or ſtrike the ſteady blow,

Or

Or ſkill'd with art the patient march to lead
O'er the long deſart, and ſurpriſe the foe!
With miſſive death to guard the wheeling rear,
As darts the bolt of Jove, and ſhines to diſappear.

V.

But young Camballo's more reflective mind
From his great ſire's immediate temper drew
A ſofter turn, and ſtudiouſly inclin'd
To judge of fame in a ſuperior view;
To mend the genius of the barren ſoil,
With prudent laws the ſocial ties to bind,
To cheriſh commerce, and encourage toil,
With health the youth to form, with truth the mind;
Arts, whence the public welfare takes its riſe,
And empire lifts her head, exalted to the ſkies!

VI.

Beneath ſome rooted oak's projected ſhade,
Where twine the laurel and the olive bloom,
In mildeſt grace amidſt the ſhelter'd bed,
The naſcent roſe diſplays its ſoft perfume:
Such Canace with all becoming ſtate,
While love enthron'd from her enchanting brow
Diſpers'd a thouſand arrows wing'd with fate,
And ſmil'd to rule th' admiring world below!

Her form was harmony, all grace her air,
As if perfection, pleas'd, had plac'd its centre there!

VII.

No affectation ſully'd beauty's pride;
No vanity beſpoke a wanton fire;
In all her action virtue ſeem'd to guide,
Nor knew her chaſter breaſt a looſe deſire:
As through the lucid diamond's poliſh'd face
Refulgent pierce the treaſur'd rays of light,
No ſpot the native luſtre can deface,
Which view'd in ev'ry ſhape is always bright:
So through fair beauty's mirror undefil'd,
With ſtill-attractive charms internal wiſdom ſmil'd.

VIII.

Now twice ten years had good Cambuſcan reign'd,
By early wars ſecur'd in honour'd eaſe,
And peace at home, and fame abroad maintain'd,
Mark'd the meridian glory of his days.
In thoſe bleſt times no labour'd ſtructures roſe,
Where grandeur from the public ruin ſprings,
The ſplendid trophies of a people's woes!
The dearly purchas'd palaces of kings!
Far other ſtate his dignity ſupports,
Beyond the borrow'd blaze of Europe's gilded courts.

Yet

IX.

Yet goodneſs ſtill a nobler ſhow ſupply'd,
Than glittering guards to awe the ſubject eye;
The hoſpitable gates were ever wide,
And ſafe the wretched to their prince drew nigh.
As the warm ſun diffuſes golden day,
So ſmil'd the common father of the land.
As ſpreads o'er earth the all-enlivening ray,
So felt the meaneſt his extenſive hand.
Happy, where thus the ſov'reign's bounty warms,
And goodneſs lends to pow'r a plenitude of charms.

X.

From Aries now approach'd the ſolar flame,
While wakeful ſpring the wint'ry chain unbinds;
Nature re-kindles to the amorous beam,
And ſwells luxuriant in the weſtern winds;
At Flora's call a thouſand beauties riſe,
To dreſs with ſweets the fair enamell'd ground,
And to the happy ſenſe and raviſh'd eyes
Waft new delight and fragrant pleaſure round.
Each bird proclaims his joy, and through the grove
Reſounds the heavenly ſong of harmony and love!

XI.

The ſeaſon this, when (ſo the prophet taught)
The joyful city kept the holy feaſt,

Which the wild Saracen with ſecret thought
Reveres, the Bairam of the turban'd Eaſt:
On whoſe preceding eve, with wonted ſtate,
Through ev'ry ſtreet the royal herald's ſound
Proclaims Cambuſcan's feaſt to crowds, who wait
With fond acclaiming joy their paſſage round:
Peace ſmiles on ev'ry brow—and Sarra glad
Prepares to keep the day, in all her pomp array'd.

XII.

Now roſe Aurora, robed in pleaſing gray,
Her ſober mantle edg'd with beamy gold;
The early clarion hails the dawning ray,
The gates their iron portals wide unfold;
High on a rock, encircled by the flood,
Where ſilver mazes oft deceiv'd the eyes,
The palace roſe: below the city ſtood,
In circuit fair, and glitter'd to the ſkies.
A gentle riſing fill'd the ſpace between,
With ſylvan pride adorn'd, and banks of native green.

XIII.

Here, ſo the ſultan's honour'd mandate bore,
Soon as the ſun diſclos'd his orient pride,
Through the glad multitude that throng'd before,
The Tartar lords conven'd on ev'ry ſide:

Along

Along the fair aſcent, in ſhining train,
Towards the palace march the noble band;
Pleas'd to renew their annual vows again,
To ſee their king, and hail his juſt command;
And wiſh to the paſt years by fate decreed,
In fair continued courſe—the future may ſucceed.

XIV.

But wiſe Cambuſcan, who obſervant knew
The pow'r ſupreme from whom all greatneſs flows,
On this peculiar day with homage due
To heaven returns the ſervice grandeur owes.
No vain idolatry his heart deceiv'd,
No flattering names of *mighty*, *high*, or *great*;
Grateful he offers ev'ry praiſe receiv'd
From a glad people and a happy ſtate;
And chiefly on this morn his heart prepares
To pay his humble thanks in ſacrifice and pray'rs.

XV.

The pomp begins, the yielding crowd give way;
A thouſand horſe the bright proceſſion lead;
A choſen troop, with bows and quivers gay,
And bold Algarſife glitters at their head!
Toil mark'd each limb, and on their hardy brow
Sate dreadleſs valour, mix'd with awe ſevere:

Yet

Yet each ſeem'd pleas'd to grace the triumph now,
And peace had ſoften'd half the victor's air:
While as they paſs, redoubled ſhouts ariſe,
And Oxus' hilly banks the echo long ſupplies.

XVI.

The pontiffs next, adminiſters of law,
The hoary Molla and the Cadi ſage,
Whoſe venerable looks impreſs'd an awe;
For wiſdom gives new dignity to age.
Not the ſour aſpect, nor the formal beard,
Nor ſaint-like viſage, nor dejected air;
But virtue dreſs'd in cheerfulneſs appear'd,
And health and temperance were pictur'd there.
The joy'd ſpectators much their ſight approve,
Whoſe goodneſs careful gain'd the people's honeſt love.

XVII.

All in the midſt, with precious care inroll'd
In tiſſued bands bedrop'd with many a gem,
A camel proud, bedeck'd with ſilk and gold,
The Koran bore, which Muſſuimen eſteem.
Around the Emirs, whoſe illuſtrious race
From the great prophet claims its high deſcent,

All

All robed in green advanc'd with gentle pace,
Beſtowing numerous bleſſings as they went:
A ſilence deep enſues,—and ev'ry look
With conſcious awe ſalutes the heaven-deſcended book.

XVIII.

Then came the merchants, an unnumber'd band,
With more familiar mien, the ſons of peace;
For commerce, now eſtabliſh'd through the land,
Had ſhed its ſweets, and dwelt in ev'ry face:
Plain was their garb, and free from gaudy pride;
For yet no baneful luxury was known;
But wealth domeſtic well that ſhow ſupplied,
And frugal manners kept their wealth their own:
Fond of the arts he rais'd, with gentle air,
Camballo graceful rode a Poliſh courſer fair.

XIX.

Amidſt the guardian ſages of the throne,
Where prudent counſels prop'd his ſettled ſtate,
Diſtinguiſh'd far, the much-lov'd monarch ſhone,
Leſs in magnificence than virtue great:
Not the rich crimſon which his perſon dreſs'd,
Nor Indian diamond his tiara crown'd;
Not the Siberian fur, nor Perſian veſt,
Nor Syrian ſabre which his veſture bound;

Such

Such wide reſpect produc'd, or fond acclaim,
As join'd in friendly bands the king's and father's name.

XX.

Here the enfeebled ſight its force excell'd,
Eager its great protector to ſurvey;
As fond the eye of infancy beheld,
Striving to bear ſome feature fond away;
That age the grateful image might renew,
That youth might ſtrong imprint Cambuſcan's name,
While to the worthy monarch's ſmiling view
His people's bliſs in preſent proſpect came:
A pleaſure this which virtue only finds,
The wreath which truth confers, and fame eternal binds.

XXI.

The rites perform'd, and every prayer addreſt,
Which faith exacts, or piety can pay;
The day's fair interval the people paſs'd
In manly exerciſe, and floral play:
Algarſife pleas'd the active youth regards,
Excites the modeſt, and commends the brave;

Aſſigns

Affigns proportion'd merit its rewards,
And teaches all with vigour to behave;
In mimic ſquadrons forms the flying horſe,
And animates the rage, and order of the courſe.

XXII.

Meanwhile Cambuſcan, with the elder chiefs,
And young Camballo held the cool debate;
With care conſult to eaſe the people's griefs,
The means to ſtrengthen and improve the ſtate.
From neighb'ring tribes commiſſion'd envoys preſs,
To court his friendſhip, or his league renew;
From ſubject provinces with glad addreſs
New deputies ſalute their monarch's view;
Who all with condeſcending grace receives,
And tenderly to each his juſt inſtructions gives.

XXIII.

Now from the zenith flam'd the orb of day,
When to the royal ſquare, ſelected place,
The warlike trumpet warns the gueſts away,
Where the king's banquet ſpreads its gladſome face:
Decent around the pleas'd attendants ſmile,
Appointed to fulfil their lord's commands;
The meaneſt they ſalute with courteous ſtyle,
And not a ſtranger unregarded ſtands.

Well

Well from their prince they learn the gentle art
With fair humanity to charm the honeſt heart.

XXIV.

Near hand, allotted to the princely train,
A ſpacious hall receiv'd each nobler gueſt;
Where to the dazzled eye a brighter ſcene
Diſplay'd the treaſures of the downy eaſt;
The walls diſpread with Perſia's tap'ſtry ſhine;
The azure roof emboſs'd with figur'd gold;
Of Caſbin's richeſt loom the carpets twine,
Where many a flow'ry maze appear'd enroll'd;
And golden cenſers, plac'd in proper room,
With all Arabia's ſweets embalm'd the fragrant dome.

XXV.

Silent around the ſlaves attendant wait,
Silent the watchful grooms diſpoſe the feaſt;
Silence and order mark the Aſian ſtate,
The ſign imperial, and ſubmiſſive breaſt:
With China's largeſt bowls they ſpread the board,
From ev'ry element the ſpoils they take,
The richeſt dainties Sarra can afford,
Fiſh from the ſtream, and fowls that haunt the lake:
The fawn and ſtag the ſpacious foreſts yield,
And herbs and various fruits the cultivated field.

Their

XXVI.

Their drinks, ſherbets attemper'd to the taſte,
A thouſand diff'rent ways with eaſtern art;
Where mingling ſpices give a racy zeſt,
And warm, like cordial wine, the gladden'd heart.
Meantime the commons with inferior fare,
Harſh ſeeming to our nicer eye, regale;
The foreſt fruits, the curdled milk of mare,
Or grain, the product of the fertile vale:
With pureſt water from the cryſtal ſtream,
That feeds with cool ſupplies life's quick conſuming flame!

XXVII.

Concludes the feaſt, with ev'ry ſervice paid,
When from the public ſquare's capacious bound,
Appear full fifty youths in white array'd,
Of comely form, with rich tiaras crown'd;
Each at his ſide with care attendant leads
A ſhapely courſer of Tartarian breed;
Who neighing ſeems to ſpurn the ground he treads,
As conſcious of his ſervitude decreed:
Marks of that duty Sarra loyal owes,
For all the peaceful ſweets Cambuſcan's reign beſtows!

An

XXVIII.

An hundred virgins, each of various hue,
In flowing robes of brighteſt azure dreſt,
Succeed in ſoft proceſſion, two by two:
Their beauteous brows with flow'ry chaplets grac'd,
Their lovely hands a ſhining treaſure bore,
Which new-eſtabliſh'd commerce brought from far,
The Indian gem, the pearl from Ormus' ſhore,
The Tyrian purple, and the painted jar;
Or the domeſtic ſpoils of Sarra's field,
The coſtly ermin'd furs her ample foreſts yield.

XXIX.

Theſe preſents offer'd with reſpectful care,
Rewarded by the gracious monarch's ſmile,
Amidſt the dome a ſecond train appear
Of foreign beauties from Circaſſia's ſoil:
From native ſweets the infant captives brought
With melting charms barbaric hearts to move,
Early in ev'ry art of pleaſing taught,
To ſing, to ſmile, to languiſh, and to love!
Magnificently gay the band advance,
And with harmonious air begin the wanton dance!

At

XXX.

At this, a ſight too looſe for wiſdom's awe,
Whoſe ſtrictneſs views ſuch mirth with eye ſevere,
Prepare the king and ſages to withdraw,
That youth its more appropriate joys may ſhare;
When unforeſeen, as wak'ning tempeſts riſe,
When troubled ocean heaves with conſcious fear;
Such, and ſo ſtrange the gath'ring murmur flies,
Increaſing, till it gains the royal ear:
Sudden the muſic ſtops—the dancers ceaſe,
And new-born wonder ſits confeſs'd in ev'ry face.

XXXI.

Soon ſhines the cauſe—for now the crowd divides,
When nobly mounted, of diſtinguiſh'd mien,
Ent'ring, a graceful ſtranger boldly rides;
His helm unbrac'd, and in his viſage ſeen
Valour, by long experience made ſedate:—
His courſer form'd of braſs, whoſe burniſh'd light
Reflected beamy rays of mimic heat;
A moving meteor to the dazzled ſight!
Proud of his charge, he fiercely glanc'd diſdain,
And bent his ſhapely neck beneath the potent rein.

XXXII.

The knight's right hand the flaming ſteed compell'd
With gentle awe, and half his rage repreſs'd;

His left to view a poliſh'd mirror held,
Of oval form, in figur'd gold enchas'd:
His finger glitter'd with the radiant pride
An oriental ſaphyr wide diſplay'd:
A naked ſcymitar adorn'd his ſide;
With torquoiſe-hilt, of damaſk'd ſteel the blade:
His comely perſonage, and ſtrange attire,
Cambuſcan ſtudious eyes, and much the court admire.

XXXIII.

Then mild advancing, where th' imperial throne
Erected to the diſtant ſight aſcends;
Quick from his wondrous ſteed alighting down,
Before the king the gentle envoy bends!
Then to the throng'd aſſembly turns his eyes,
With due obedience paid to all around;
While general ſilence marks a pleas'd ſurpriſe,
And not a whiſper ſteals along the ground:
Each aſpect earneſt on the iſſue hung,
When thus the knight began, with no ungraceful tongue!

XXXIV.

"To thee, for virtue as for arms renown'd,
"Whoſe name to diſtant lands extends its rays;
"Whoſe youth with fame, whoſe age with honours crown'd,
"Aſia repeats!—too narrow for thy praiſe!

"Our

" Our holy Califf, whoſe all-righteous ſway
" Through happy nations ſpreads one common ſmile;
" Northward from Ormus to the Euxine Sea,
" And weſt from Indus to the banks of Nile;
" To thee, Al-raſchid, round whoſe renown'd head
" May heav'n its balmy dew of conſtant bleſſings ſhed!

XXXV.

" To thee, whoſe piety his zeal befriends,
" Whoſe arms have triumph'd in the prophet's cauſe,
" Theſe marks of amity our Califf ſends,
" Proofs of his eſtimation and applauſe!
" Nor ſlight the preſents, though no form they wear,
" That ſeems attractive to a monarch's eye;
" More ſecret worth they boaſt, and virtues rare,
" Than all the treaſures hid beneath the ſky,
" Which heav'n-taught ſcience only can beſtow,
" And myſtic Taliſmans, that rule the world below.

XXXVI.

" This ſteed, which, mighty prince, you now behold
" As motionleſs—though recent from the reins,

" Form'd though in ſemblance of metallic mould,
" Yet in himſelf the ſprings of life retains:
" Leſs fleet the feather'd arrow wings its way,
" Borne on the pinions of the breezy wind;
" Leſs ſwift the canvaſs'd veſſel ſkims the ſea,
" Than leave his ſteps the leſs'ning ſpace behind,
" Brave the ſurrounding deep; where oceans flow,
" Or mount the ſteep broad rock, and loſe the plain below!

XXXVII.

" Or, would'ſt thou from the ſphere terreſtrial riſe,
" And learn the boundleſs regions of the air,
" Th' aerial guide ſhall waft thee through the ſkies
" To the remoteſt ſtar that glitters there.
" Firm ſhall he bear thy truſted weight impreſs'd
" Through floods that threaten, or through fires that glow;
" Or guard thee with impenetrable breaſt
" Through pointed javelins o'er the proſtrate foe:
" For the ſage author form'd his juſt deſign
" With planetary ſkill, and artifice divine!

XXXVIII.

" Yet rooted ſhall the beauteous image ſtand,
" A lifeleſs monument ſhall preſs the place;

" Void

" Void of all ſenſe, and deaf to all command,
" Nor human force diſturb it from its baſe;
" Unleſs thy thought the myſtic words retain,
" That wake to motion the inſenſate maſs;
" That give direction to the rapid rein,
" Or ſtop the ſprings of animated braſs."
He paus'd:—diffuſive as the murmur ran,
When thus reſuming ſoon—th' embaſſador began:

XXXIX.

" This mirror—ſo our empreſs fair commands,
" As pledge of mutual faith and friendſhip meant—
" To thy imperial conſort's beauteous hands,
" With grateful joy, commiſſion'd, I preſent.
" No ſpecious forms from hence reflected glare,
" No ſhadowy objects of material kind;
" But mental truths within diſclos'd appear;
" Fate's future births enquiry here ſhall find;
" And in the optic plane thy thought ſhall trace
" The various fortunes wait thy long deſcending race.

XL.

" Does war or faction threat thy promis'd reign?
" Here ſhalt thou ſee the perils, and avert;
" Does plague or famine hover near thy plain?
" A timely caution ſhall ariſe from art:

" If falſehood lurks in flatt'ry's fair diſguiſe?
" Here truth's fair face ſhall point the Syren's face:
" If vice by virtue's ruin aims to riſe?
" Here ſhall it meet thy knowledge and diſgrace:
" And thy obſervant thought with eaſe ſhall find
" The variegated ſhapes that veil the human mind.

XLI.

" Here pleas'd thy gentle ſultaneſs ſhall prove
" A thouſand ways the ſportive mirror's ſkill;
" Survey the crafts of jealouſy and love,
" The ſtratagems that wait a female will;
" Through ev'ry maze the ſhifting heart purſue,
" From fancy's ſtart to reaſon's cloſe retreat;
" Obſerve imagination's ſubtile clue,
" And mark ideas how they riſe and ſet.
" Gain'd but the key—which to the queen I bear,
" Long may her virtues prove the guardian mirror's care!"

XLII.

So ſaid—the preſent with complacent air
To an attendant near the envoy gave;
When thus proceeding—" Further ſpeaks my care,
" If thou, all gracious monarch, grant the leave!

" For

" For thus our ſov'reign lady bade me ſay;
" Pleas'd has ſhe heard a northern princeſs' fame:
" One faith we keep, one prophet we obey;
" Let cloſer bands unite our ſiſter's name.
" The roſe of Tigris Sarra's violet woos,
" And with this myſtic ring her valu'd friendſhip ſues.

XLIII.

" When from the earth the King of Wiſdom fled,
" Whoſe ſcience pierc'd through matter's bound-
leſs field;
" When mourn'd the eaſt that Salomon was dead,
" To whom the realms of ſpirit ſtood reveal'd;
" The potent ſeal incircling grac'd his hand,
" Whence all its pow'r this gem's impreſſion takes;
" Obedient nature feels its wide command,
" And at its call a new creation breaks.
" Each vegetable birth its power reveals,
" The noxious weed that kills, or plant that whole-
ſome heals.

XLIV.

" Or, would the princeſs, while with cheerful eyes
" She views the beauties of the op'ning ſpring,
" Curious enquire the language of the ſkies,
" Or learn the notes the feather'd nations ſing?

" Hence ſhall the vocal natives of the groves
" With well-known hymns ſalute her early walk;
" Hence ſhall their laws, their manners, and their loves
" Become familiar ſubjects of her talk:
" And while the ſylvan world her thoughts command,
" Her grateful mind ſhall own a princeſs' gen'rous hand."

XLV.

He ſaid, and bow'd, and ſpeech reſum'd once more,
While from his ſide he drew the ſhining blade;
" And laſt this gift the Califf's order bore,
" Be to your princely ſons with honour paid:
" Such is the temper of the deadly ſteel,
" Nor the firm marble, nor the rooted oak,
" Not arms of adamant its touch can feel
" Unmov'd, or bear the fury of its ſtroke:
" No earthly wight its conteſt may endure,
" No ſkill of pharmacy its leaſt eraſure cure.

XLVI.

" Yet ſtrange, though true, its double charms prevail,
" With friendly care to raiſe the vanquiſh'd foe;
" The fatal wound the hilt alone can heal,
" And with immediate eaſe relieve the blow;

" From

" From the deep gaſh though ſtream'd the vital flood,
" And the wing'd ſoul fate ready to depart;
" Reſtrain'd, at once ſhall ſtop the iſſuing blood,
" With cordial life again to warm the heart!
" Its ſov'reign touch the balm of health reſtore
" As mercy's gentle hand allays the rage of pow'r.

XLVII.

" Nor judge, great prince, the gifts as ill aſſign'd,
" Directed by our Califf's holy views:
" Safe is the ſteed in thy diſpoſing mind,
" Whoſe virtue never can his pow'r abuſe:
" The mirror well thy conſort may behold,
" Reflecting all her innocence ſincere:
" Well may the ring thy daughter's hand enfold,
" Whoſe ſoul is like the ſpotleſs perſon, fair:
" And, aided by the ſword, thy future race
" Shall to the toils of war unite the arts of peace!"

XLVIII.

Submiſs he ceas'd:—when riſing from his throne
The monarch mild deſcending ſtretch'd his hand,
Well pleas'd the grateful embaſſy to own,
Borne by the ſervice of ſo wiſe a hand:
When thus:—" Kind ſtranger! not the voice of fame,
" That ſpreads its ſound diffus'd to either pole,

" Can

" Can raiſe the luſtre of our Califf's name,
" Or more endear his virtues to my ſoul:
" In whom the prophet's viceroy I revere,
" And with continued joy his daily praiſes hear!

XLIX.

" His noble gifts with pleaſure I receive,
" Which ſecret worth and myſtic value boaſt;
" But more eſteem the faith he yields to give,
" His friendſhip ever wiſh'd and honour'd moſt.
" Yet rare thy preſents, and exceeding far
" The various gems our eaſtern world brings forth,
" The ruby rich, the diamond's mimic ſtar,
" Or the unblemiſh'd pearl of orient worth;
" Greatly beyond what Sarra's regions lend,
" Or all the ſylvan ſpoils her ample foreſts ſend.

L.

" Welcome thy preſence on this feſtal day,
" To grace the honours of our royal feaſt,
" When pleaſure ſits on ev'ry aſpect gay,
" And in my people's joy is mine confeſs'd:
" Though us'd to better cheer, which heav'n beſtows
" On lands in happier climes their lot aſſign'd;
" Where Bagdad riſes, or where Tygris flows,
" And earth untaught is ſtill benignly kind:

" Where

" Where the mild ſun declines in beauty gay,
" Or beams with orient charms to dreſs the face of day.

LI.

" Yet here till thy return the greeting find,
" Our barren country yields the toiler's uſe;
" Where nature won, and by compulſion kind,
" Conſents but coy to aid the ſlow produce:
" Yet ſuch the pow'r of the induſtrious hand,
" That year by year the ſoil more kindly grows;
" Art pours new beauties o'er the changing land,
" And by degrees increaſing plenty flows;
" Our foreſts ſhrink, as new plantations riſe,
" And culture ſpreads new fields to the delighted ſkies.

LII.

" Meantime, aſſociate at our royal board,
" Accept the cares our gratitude would pay;
" Freely command what Sarra can afford,
" To eaſe the labours of the tedious way."
He ceas'd—and ſmiling with a gracious hand
He plac'd the honour'd ſtranger by his ſide;
While round the nobleſt chiefs, a ſhining band,
Approach to welcome him with decent pride.
His courteous ſpeech and manner all admire,
And of the Syrian court the news they much enquire.

Now

LIII.

Now plenteous had the gentle envoy din'd,
Pleas'd with the treatment which the monarch gave,
When from the zenith now the ſun declin'd,
To cool his ardors in the Caſpian wave;
When thus the king—"Not here we boaſt the means
"To give thy character the honours due;
"One eaſy ſtep to crown thy toil remains;
"Eaſtward our regal caſtle ſtands in view:
"There take thy reſt moſt welcome, and receive
"That friendſhip and reſpect our amity ſhall give."

LIV.

The monarch roſe—th' officious guard attend;
The knight with graceful air his courſer leads,
On horſeback with the Tartar prince aſcends,
And to the palace all the pomp proceeds:
But moſt his ſteed from the admiring crowd
New wonder drew, and much enquiry rais'd:
So ſtately was his port, ſo firm he trod,
That all his geſture and proportion prais'd;
And own'd, of foreign and domeſtic breed,
Eye never yet had ſeen a more majeſtic ſteed.

LV.

Of due dimenſions was his mediate ſize,
While, looſely floating from his ſwan-like creſt,

Bright

Bright wav'd his mane: deep piercing were his eyes,
Strong were his limbs, and broad his burniſh'd breaſt;
Thick from his noſtrils breath'd the fiery ſteam;
His tail behind a length of ſplendour flew;
He ſeem'd to move within an orb of flame!
So much appear'd the wondrous object new,
That all intent purſue th' amazing ſight,
So much does vulgar minds all novelty delight!

LVI.

Now to the palace reach'd the cavalcade,
Where the ſtrange warrior and the king alight,
And with his uſual grace Cambuſcan paid
Repeated welcome to the Syrian knight.
Strict o'er his horſe's neck the paſſive reins
With artificial care the envoy drew,
When, lo! all motionleſs the form remains,
Nor life diſcover'd, nor ſenſation knew:
Fix'd as the baſis of the rocky ſtone,
The dead inactive braſs return'd a hollow groan.

LVII.

They bear the Califf's ſword before the king,
While to the hall of ſtate the knight attends;
Inward the mirror and the myſtic ring
To the imperial fair the ſultan ſends;

Kindly

Kindly requiring to the preſent feaſt
The beauteous queen and princeſs may repair,
With royal kindneſs to regale their gueſt,
And all the rites of hoſpitable care;
That Syrian dames from his report may know,
That gentleneſs can live amidſt a land of ſnow!

LVIII.

Meantime without, around the famous horſe
In crowds the Uſbeck city ſeems to ſpread;
Much they ſurvey his make, and much diſcourſe,
As varied notions fill the vulgar head:
To magic ſome the ſtrange effects impute,
Each to his fancy forms a diff'rent cauſe;
Little they reaſon, greatly they diſpute,
And ſtill the loudeſt moſt attention draws:
As ignorance to knowledge pores its route,
Never proceeds direct—but wanders ſtill about.

LIX.

Like as a ſwarm of bees new-gath'ring play,
Iſſuing advent'rous from their native home;
They ſpread thick murm'ring to the evening-ray,
And yet of habitation dubious roam;
Till the wiſe huſbandman with tuneful ſound
Beneath the ſhade the vagrant tumult draws;

They

They wand'ring ſtop, and view the dome around,
And fix their colony with loud applauſe:
So circling round the horſe the Tartars crowd,
And ſpeak their vaſt ſurpriſe with acclamations loud!

LX.

Return we now, invited to the hall,
Where fairer objects our attendance claim;
Such as are envy'd and admir'd by all,
The graceful courtier, and the beauteous dame.
What, though no dances fir'd the virgin chaſte,
Leſs charming did the mild engagers ſeem?
What, though no ſmiles the courtier's brow defac'd,
Leſs worthy was his honour of eſteem?
To us, indeed, ſuch manners wild may ſhow,
Where dreſs creates a belle, and vanity a beau!

LXI.

Yet as reſtraint but fans the am'rous fire,
And nature's laws can never be ſuppreſs'd;
So the ſoft boſom heav'd with young deſire,
And the fond eye the tender heart confeſs'd:
Venus, who then in Piſces held her court,
With friendly rays beheld th' enamour'd pair,
Approv'd the intercourſe, and bleſs'd the ſport,
Beyond my faint deſcription to declare:

Her

Her arts the Roman muſe can better tell,
For none ſhould ſing of love, but thoſe his influence feel.

LXII.

Nor wanted cordial drinks, or viands rare,
To cheer the ſoul and grace the royal feaſt:
The gentle empreſs made that taſk her care,
With choiceſt fare to treat the grateful gueſt.
But more than all her matchleſs converſe charm'd,
Where wiſdom flow'd from the inſtructed heart:
Where beam'd kind gentleneſs, and beaming warm'd
With cunning ſoftneſs the attracted heart.
Scarce could the raviſh'd knight his looks refrain;
Or if ſhe ceas'd, not wiſh the joy commence again.

LXIII.

Oft to the king unſeen he turn'd his eyes,
Or in the ſons remark'd their father's air;
Oft he beheld the queen with new ſurpriſe,
But moſt the princeſs, amiably fair!
The more he look'd he ſaw on each impreſt
The marks of majeſty that awe the ſight,
An air of greatneſs not to be expreſs'd,
Which calls for homage, while it gives delight;

Something

Something that more of dignity confers,
Than all the glittering toys the ermin'd monarch wears.

LXIV.

Hard to deſcribe, whence ſprings this air aſſign'd
In man and brute to excellence of race;
This outward mark of a ſuperior mind,
That ſeems to claim precedency of place;
But that experience ſhows by conſtant courſe
The nobleſt animals their like create;
From the ſelected ſire, the generous horſe
Derives his fire, and ſprings from earth elate;
Hears the glad trumpet calling from afar,
And rapid pours his flight amidſt the rage of war.

LXV.

In man's imperial race th' effect's the ſame,
Whatever cauſe the like diſtinction breeds;
Whether from mutual paſſion ſprings the flame,
Or minds congenial ſtamp the vital ſeeds:
Elſe on extended Guinea's torrid coaſt,
Where the broad mouth and noſe depreſt prevail,
In thoſe who regal blood and lineage boaſt,
Why do the gen'ral features rarely fail?

Why ſhows the Auſtrian lip the Auſtrian line?
And in ſome ſemblant mark the hero loves to ſhine?

LXVI.

Now the ſhrill trumpet warn'd the flight of day,
The loud Muëzin call'd to ev'ning pray'r;
When roſe Cambuſcan, ſuch his uſual way,
With all his court to worſhip to repair.
That duty paid—returning as they paſs
Along the ſpacious caſtle's outer ſquare,
The ſultan ſtop'd to view the ſteed of braſs,
Incompaſs'd as he ſtood by numbers there,
And begs the knight the ſecret would diſcloſe,
To which the beauteous form the pow'rs of motion owes.

LXVII.

To whom the knight—"O king! whoſe juſt concern
"Still nouriſhes devotion's pureſt flame;
"Nor need I tell, nor need thy wiſdom learn,
"The wonders wrought by the Almighty name.
"By this inſpir'd our holy prophet wrought
"Performances exceeding reaſon's line;
"High miracles beyond the reach of thought,
"That infidels might own the faith divine;

"Whoſe

" Whoſe call the earth and air and fire obey,
" And the relentleſs grave, and the unfathom'd ſea!

LXVIII.

" When, taught by this, the ſlumb'ring ſteed you wake,
" Firm ſeize the reins, and with this pin ſecure;
" Undaunted then the deſtin'd journey take,
" Through ev'ry element the courſe is ſure.
" Wouldſt thou thy march continue, or be ſtill,
" Touch but the pin, and whiſper but the word,
" The ſteed obedient ſhall obſerve thy will,
" Shall vaniſh at thy call, or ſtand reſtor'd;
" Only the bridle and the pin retain,
" Elſe loſt is ev'ry care, and every project vain."

LXIX.

So ſaid—he to the king's attentive ear
With rev'rence due the myſtic word unfolds:
The monarch bow'd, and with concealing care
The word repeats, and faſt the bridle holds;
Quick as life's current glides along the veins,
The warm ſenſation ſo his touch perceiv'd,
That thaw'd the ſtiffneſs of the brazen reins,
While the firm cheſt with new vibration heav'd:

His eyes their fire reſum'd, he rais'd his head,
And ſtately walk'd along, as pleas'd the ſultan led.

LXX.

Cambuſcan much the gentle ſteed careſs'd,
Thus grown familiar to his leading hand:
The gentle ſteed an equal joy confeſs'd,
To ſerve the generous monarch's juſt command:
Much to the num'rous court aſſembled round
The king his ſhape and his behaviour prais'd;
The court applauding ſtill return'd the ſound,
And all the voice of admiration rais'd:
Till from his neck the reins at once he drew,
And vaniſh'd quick the ſteed from ev'ry mortal's view.

LXXI.

The ſword and bridle with peculiar care,
Deputed nobles, by the king's command,
Safe to the caſtle's ſtrongeſt fortreſs bear,
Where all the monarch's ample treaſures ſtand.
The royal company direct return,
In ſocial mirth to crown the happy night;
While round perfum'd a thouſand tapers burn,
And the whole palace ſeems illumin'd bright:

The

The feaſt renews, the converſe ſprightly grows,
And cheerfulneſs around her balmy influence throws.

LXXII.

The worthy king, whoſe long experienc'd years
Had made him judge of manners and of minds,
Pleas'd with the Syrian's converſe much appears,
For virtue ſoon its own reſemblance finds;
Some ſecret ſympathy of nature draws
With its coercive bands the noble ſoul;
As uniſons accord harmonious cauſe,
Or the fond needle trembles to its pole:
'Tis thus each other know the truly great,
Without the tedious forms inferior friendſhips wait.

LXXIII.

Meantime between the princes roſe debate
About the wondrous ſteed the envoy brought,
Algarſife urging, with his uſual heat,
The motion ſome informing genie wrought:
But cool Camballo with a ſceptic air
Seem'd to believe the ſecret lay within,
That hid remain'd the ſprings of action there,
And mov'd or ceas'd directed by the pin:
Each brings new proofs the other to confute,
Till to the monarch's ear arriv'd the warm diſpute.

LXXIV.

Silent awhile the king reflection made,
And ſaw the point not eaſy to decide;
Till kind remembrance uſher'd to his aid
A hoary ſage, whoſe ſkill he oft had try'd;
By birth a Mede, but whoſe enquiring ſight
Each region of the travell'd eaſt had known,
Wiſdom the object ſole of his delight,
And the whole ſphere of knowledge ſeem'd his own.
Nor read in books alone, his generous mind
Embrac'd with cordial zeal the welfare of mankind.

LXXV.

The various faiths the peopled world divide
Juſtly impartial had his thought ſurvey'd;
Reaſon his ſtandard ſtill, and truth his guide,
Nor int'reſt, prejudice, or paſſion weigh'd:
The Magi's books he knew, the Brachmin's lore,
Th' Egyptian figure, and the Jewiſh rite,
The Chriſtian law, intended to reſtore,
But now defac'd by ſuperſtition quite:
With the mix'd plan th' Arabian prophet drew,
O'er Aſia now which ſpread, as new religions do.

LXXVI.

He ſaw that nature, through her wide command,
O'er all her works diffus'd one equal ſmile;

Nor

Nor kept the bounties of her laviſh hand
Confin'd to this or that peculiar ſoil:
He knew, that vain was ev'ry art, deſign'd
To check the freedom of the human will;
That no reſtraints could ſhackle up the mind,
Which, ſelf-determin'd, kept her empire ſtill:
And in th' extended ſcene of human race,
As varied were the thoughts, as various was the face!

LXXVII.

Hence Caſroes (ſo the Median ſage's name)
This healing principle reflective drew;
Others' opinions candid not to blame,
But calm the paths of wiſdom to purſue:
Pleas'd with the little nature's hand requires,
Wealth, honour, pleaſures, titles he diſdain'd;
Few were his wants, as mod'rate his deſires,
The happy maſter of himſelf he reign'd!
A joy to all but minds ſerene unknown,
Beyond the wreaths of fame, or ſplendors of a throne.

LXXVIII.

On a fair bank, by Oxus' winding ſhore,
Inclos'd with wood, a little ſpot he found;
There had he fix'd his reſt, and, greatly poor,
Liv'd on the fruits of his domeſtic ground:

Oft had Cambuſcan, tir'd with cares of ſtate,
Sought the refreſhment of his little cave;
There philoſophic held the cool debate,
Nor ſcorn'd the counſels which his wiſdom gave:
Whoſe life reveal'd the value of his art,
And to the learned head was join'd the honeſt heart.

LXXIX.

For him immediate then the ſultan ſends,
His ſeaſonable preſence to require;
The worthy ſage the meſſenger attends,
And comes obedient to the king's deſire.
His head with age's froſt was ſilver'd o'er,
But on his cheek ſtill bluſh'd the temp'rate roſe.
Decent, though plain, a flowing robe he wore,
And manly dignity his perſon ſhows,
For ſuch his carriage ſeem'd, and gentle port,
As if his life had been no ſtranger to a court.

LXXX.

The Syrian knight (for ſo requeſts the king)
The nature of the Califf's gifts explains;
The horſe, the ſword, the mirror, and the ring,
And points the qualities which each retains:
When thus Cambuſcan—"Coſroes! O declare,
"For beſt the truth thy wiſdom can impart,

"Whence

" Whence boaſt theſe preſents ſuch perfection rare?
" From nature ſprings the ſecret, or from art?
" Or animates the ſteed ſome pow'r divine?
" Or do mechanic wheels direct the bold deſign?"

LXXXI.

To whom the ſage—" Not, mighty prince, we boaſt,
" Of ſuch myſterious gifts to judge the cauſe:
" Leaſt knows the wiſeſt, when he knows the moſt,
" Of matter's properties, and motion's laws:
" Form'd of two principles diſtinguiſh'd quite,
" We find diſtinctly our corporeal frame:
" Spirit, we know, with matter can unite;
" Yet ſearch in vain from whence the union came,
" Or where ſubſiſts inviſible the tye,
" Which faſtens life itſelf, and loſing which we die."

LXXXII.

" What gives commiſſion to the wint'ry war,
" When the loud ſtorm enchafes the troubled deep,
" Or ſooths to peace the elemental jar,
" And huſhes the relenting winds to ſleep:
" What cauſes the pale moon's alternate light,
" By turns repleniſh, and by turns decay,
" Fair as ſhe glides along the face of night,
" And ſhapes through mazy clouds her pathleſs way:

" Or

" Or from what origin thoſe clouds aſcend,
" In vain our feeble ſenſe would ſtrive to comprehend

LXXXIII.

" All the phenomena of boundleſs air,
" Which ſtrike with wonder the unſettled eye,
" The meteor's flaſh, the comet's ruddy glare,
" Or the loud thunder burſting from the ſky;
" The dark eclipſe, when o'er the orb of day
" Its gloomy ſtain prevailing darkneſs ſheds;
" The ſhining bow, whoſe variegated ray
" O'er the pale cloud its painted circlet ſpreads;
" In vain our low reſearches would purſue,
" With weak defective ſchemes of ſcience ſtill untrue

LXXXIV.

" Yet ſcience ſees direct, far as it may,
" While ignorance in endleſs darkneſs pores;
" Safe treads the ſage, where reaſon points the way,
" One ſov'reign cauſe diſcovers and adores;
" The further that in nature's road he treads,
" He ſees eternal wiſdom guide the whole:
" The more the glitt'ring page of heav'n he reads,
" He feels that wiſdom penetrate the ſoul;
" And what the vulgar view with careleſs eyes,
" Silent contemplates he with pleaſure and ſurpriſe.

" Matter

LXXXV.

" Matter he ſees, as ſtruggling to a birth,
" Through all its elemental forms aſpire;
" Earth riſe from water, air refine from earth,
" To mount, and purify itſelf in fire;
" Fire, the firſt principle, whoſe vital ray,
" Heat, motion, ſenſe, and life productive breeds,
" That, circling from th' exhauſtleſs ſource of day,
" Wakens from death the dull material ſeeds;
" That to itſelf attractive all invites,
" Till in the parent-cauſe creation fond unites!

LXXXVI.

" This, ſure, we know, that matter has its laws,
" By which impell'd, the ſtubborn maſs obeys;
" That ſecret ſympathy ſome objects draws,
" And by its pow'r can ſeeming wonders raiſe:
" Hence, would it ſeem, that this myſterious horſe,
" Though form'd to ſemblance of material mould,
" Is taught to move by ſympathetic force,
" And to perform at will the actions told;
" As the Greek Pegaſus was fam'd to bear
" The bold Bellerophon through tracts of boundleſs air.

" Hence

LXXXVII.

" Hence taught, the ſage to matter can infuſe
" New qualities to ſuit his juſt deſign;
" Can ſhape the maſs ſubſervient to his views,
" And give the workmanſhip a ſtamp divine!
" Thus, in the honour'd Califf's precious ſword
" Oppoſing virtues may their influence ſhed;
" The hilt may ſalutary balm afford,
" To cloſe the wound the edge relentleſs made.
" As fam'd Achilles' ſpear confeſs'd the art,
" To cure th' inflicted ſtroke, and eaſe the deadly ſmart.

LXXXVIII.

" Thus may the mirror and the myſtic ring
" The gentle knight's deſcription well maintain;
" From planetary ſkill their virtues ſpring,
" Which only deep-read ſcience can attain:
" As o'er affrighted Miſraim's fertile land
" The wand of Moſes deſolation ſpread,
" Or grac'd the ſignet Salomon's right hand,
" Whoſe pow'r could wake the ſlumbers of the dead:
" Could from the eye remove the veil of night,
" And place the realms of ſpirit to th' aſtoniſh'd ſight.

" But

LXXXIX.

" But while, Cambuſcan, thou exalt'ſt thy head,
" In peaceful ſway and foreign friendſhips bleſt,
" Remember heav'n, that all thy greatneſs made,
" Nor let weak pride pollute thy royal breaſt.
" All that we ſee in life's deceitful dream,
" Like us, the vain ſpectators, glides away.
" Only great Oroſmanes ſhines the ſame,
" Unwaſted fountain of eternal day;
" Who in himſelf all nature comprehends,
" From whom all beings ſpring, in whom all being ends."

XC.

He ceas'd—attentive as the Syrian knight
Heard the ſweet accents flowing from his tongue,
And felt within ſuch exquiſite delight,
He had not thought a ſummer's audience long.
The monarch thanks return'd—th' applauding crowd
With common voice repeat the ſage's praiſe:
Night now began to ſpread her heavy ſhroud,
And call the weary'd limbs to needful eaſe:
Cambuſcan roſe—the court retire to reſt,
And on her midnight throne deep ſilence reigns confeſt.

O gentle

XCI.

O gentle ſleep! thou cheriſher of health!
From temp'rance bred, the nurſe of ſweet repoſe!
In whom the peaſant finds a mine of wealth;
To whom his happineſs the lover owes:
Thou balm of life! whoſe kindly warmth reſtores
Light to the eyes, and vigour to the heart;
Whoſe preſence luxury in vain implores,
Kind while thou fly'ſt to take affliction's part;
Say, by what magic fetters doſt thou bind
In thy delightful thrall the agitated mind?

XCII.

Inthron'd on mazy Oxus' verdant ſhore,
We left thee, goddeſs, of thy ſway poſſeſt;
Cambuſcan's palace felt thy peaceful pow'r,
And through the gloom thy influence ſate confeſt:
Fair dreams, thy beauteous handmaids, all around
To ev'ry gueſt thy buſy mandates ſpread;
Each, by their miniſtry, contented found,
The ſep'rate joy to which their wiſhes led:
Soft am'rous vows th' unbluſhing virgin hears,
And to the warrior's view the glitt'ring camp appears!

XCIII.

Thee, placid queen of night, the ſultan own'd,
In ſhining viſions of recover'd arms:

Thou

Thou to the Syrian lengthen'd wiſdom's ſound,
And Coſroes ſtill his fix'd attention charms:
But moſt the Tartar princeſs claim'd thy care,
To ſooth the ſoft impatience of her breaſt;
Her curious thoughts the ring's impreſſion bear,
And new ideas interrupt her reſt;
In fancy ſhe ſurveys the ſylvan ſcenes,
And hears the feather'd choirs, and learns their tuneful ſtrains!

XCIV.

Calm were her uſual ſlumbers wont to be;
Calm as the current of her temp'rate blood;
Calm as her blameleſs ſoul, from paſſions free,
That knew no evil, and that wiſh'd all good!
Yet ſomething, whence ſhe knew not, what or how,
Invaſive now infected her repoſe;
She felt ſoft quiet vaniſh from her brow,
And ere the morning dawn'd, the princeſs roſe:
She calls her virgin-train, who near remain'd;
And inſtant at her call her virgin-train attend.

XCV.

Great was their fright, and obvious their concern,
What cauſe ſo ſoon their gentle miſtreſs rais'd;
Till, from herſelf inform'd, her health they learn,
And by her ſmiles they find their fears appeas'd;

But

But chief Olinda—more a friend than ſlave,
Whom from Podolia lawleſs rapine drew;
Whom to his daughter great Cambuſcan gave,
By purchaſe his, ere yet herſelf ſhe knew:
Whoſe modeſt worth had gain'd the princeſs' ear,
By long experienc'd tyes of faithful duty dear!

XCVI.

Now roſy morn, the harbinger of day,
Beam'd o'er the azure hills with radiance bright;
Awak'ning nature felt the gladſome ray,
And ſmil'd as conſcious of approaching light;
When the fair princeſs iſſu'd to the plain,
Attended by a band of lovely maids;
Such Cynthia, when, amidſt her ſportive train,
Her early horn reſounds in Latmos' ſhades:
Cloth'd in a lightſome dreſs, thus bends her way,
To grace the flow'ry field, this charming Queen of May!

XCVII.

By Oxus' ſide, engirt with wood-brow'd hills,
A ſpacious compaſs lay the ſylvan ſcene;
Through which clear-ſtreaming ran two mazy rills,
That fed the ſoil with ever-living green:
But as the ground unequal check'd the view,
So by degrees its varied beauties roſe;

Dales,

Dales, rocks, or groves from landſkips ever new,
And blending proſpects new delights diſcloſe.
Nature unrivall'd here maintain'd her part,
Too ſweetly wild for chance, too greatly bold for art.

XCVIII.

From teeming earth the vapour now exhal'd,
That courts the preſence of the orient ſun;
But through the miſt the ruddy orb prevail'd,
All warm with joy, his daily courſe to run.
By the clear river ſtretch'd the winding vale,
Where, as it often chanc'd, the princeſs ſtray'd;
A thouſand ſweets embalm'd the ſpicy gale,
A thouſand flow'rs luxuriant bleſs'd the mead,
Which, as her virgins ſport, they pull with care,
The morning-wreath to form, for Canace to wear!

XCIX.

There ſafe the elk, the antelope, and deer
The harmleſs ſhelter of the place enjoy'd;
Crop'd the ſweet herb, or drank the fountain clear;
No fears alarm'd them; for no foes annoy'd:
With vocal muſic now the foreſts ring,
As artleſs love inſpires the melting voice;
And nature, kindling at the ſmile of ſpring,
Teaches her happy children to rejoice.

Fair Canace the ſoft ſenſation feels,
And with the whiſp'ring breeze the virtuous pleaſure
ſteals.

C.

As from the native blind's unconſcious eyes
The ſkilful leech th' aſſailing ſpeck withdraws;
Sudden he ſees a world unknown ariſe,
Where objects multiply'd confuſion cauſe:
With ſuch emotion did the princeſs' ear
Receive the language of the woods around;
So, by her myſtic ring inſtructed, hear,
That not devoid of reaſon was the ſound;
While with reſponſive note the nations ſing,
"Hail to the roſe of May! Hail, lovely queen of
ſpring!"

CI.

But ſtop we here, ere too prolix we be;
The wanton error that of many a muſe,
Who, lur'd by ev'ry flow'r, and ev'ry tree,
Too far the too inviting path purſues.
Leſt the tir'd ear reject the tedious ſtrain,
Judgment ſhould ſtill the flights of fancy guide;
The point propos'd ſhould reaſon firm retain,
That fame may o'er the laſting work preſide.

Mind

Mind we th' unerring law of ſacred ſong,
That the delightful tale ſhould never be too long.

CII.

But as ſhe nearer to the foreſt drew,
A diff'rent object claim'd her gentle care:
Of foliage ſtript, alone, an alder grew,
Whoſe naked branches trembled to the air.
From hence ſhrill cries a beauteous falcon ſent,
Which well her bitterneſs of woe expreſs'd;
While ever as ſhe ſhriek'd, with cruel bent,
She fix'd her beak impreſſive in her breaſt;
So that the tide of life, faſt flowing round,
Diſtain'd the wither'd bark, and trickled to the ground.

CIII.

Fair ſeem'd her form, and fair her aſpect ſeem'd,
As ever eye beheld, or falcon wore;
Like the pure ſnow, her ſilver plumage beam'd,
With mingling ruddy ſtreaks empurpled o'er.
Such was her look, that not the tyger fell,
Who lawleſs roams the deſart wild for prey;
Nor eagle fierce, that from her airy cell
Wings with deſtructive aim her rapid way;
But would have ſoften'd been to hear her lay,
And, by compaſſion taught, have felt their rage decay.

CIV.

Mov'd with the plaintive anguiſh of her tongue,
Her mournful geſture, and her bleeding wound;
The neighb'ring birds from ev'ry thicket throng,
And ſilent hear, and droop the wing around!
Soon the mild princeſs through her tender ſoul
Felt the prevailing force of pity glide;
The voice of ſorrow all her ſenſes ſtole,
As from the tree diſtinct the falcon cry'd;
"O gentle ſtranger, ſome compaſſion ſhow;
"O heavenly beauty, deign to eaſe my matchleſs woe."

CV.

Quick to the tree the gentle princeſs flew,
Where ſtill her ſad laments the mourner made;
And in the falcon's tongue (which then ſhe knew)
With accent mild and tender look ſhe ſaid:
"Much ſuffering bird! the faireſt of thy kind!
"Whate'er misfortunes thus thy anguiſh move;
"In me, the daughter of a monarch, find
"A friend; with me a ſure protection prove:
"My hands thy wounds ſhall heal with precious balm,
"And on my breaſt reclin'd, thy woes ſhall know a calm.

"But

CVI.

" But why thy breaſt this boundleſs ſorrow fills,
" Which ſighing echo wafts the woods around?
" Why from thy breaſt the crimſon drop diſtils,
" That mars the verdure of the blaſted ground?
" If death has robb'd thee of thy ſlaughter'd mate,
" For whom deſpairing, comfortleſs you ſhow;
" Or if ſome envious ſhaft with cruel fate
" Has pierc'd thy boſom with a deadly blow?
" Oh quick the cauſe reveal!—for never yet
" On one of feather'd kind ſo was my fancy ſet!"

CVII.

Scarce had ſhe ſpoke, when from the lifeleſs ſpray,
Where perch'd the falcon did her griefs repeat,
The fluttering mourner fell, and panting lay,
As pleas'd to die beneath the princeſs' feet.
Soon from the earth the bird her pity rais'd,
And in her lap with fond indulgence plac'd;
Then call'd her maids, who on the action gaz'd,
And bound its wounds and tenderly embrac'd:
Till by her hands reviv'd the falcon woke,
Grateful beheld the fair, and faintly thus beſpoke.

CVIII.

" O bleſt compaſſion! heav'n-deſcended child!
" Whoſe power is beſt perceiv'd in nobleſt hearts;

" Who, dreſs'd in ſmiles of patience, meekly mild,
" To want, relief; to mis'ry, eaſe imparts:
" By thee inſpir'd—this heavenly maid has felt
" A pain for ſorrows to herſelf unknown;
" With kind humility has comfort dealt
" To me, amidſt the wilds of nature thrown.
" For which may guardian heav'n her virtues ſhield
" From all the poiſon'd arts, that drove me to the field!

CIX.

" Yet though reflection ſhould convey a dart
" With every word to wing my fleeting life;
" The ſtory of my woe ſhall I impart
" At thy command, and bear the cruel ſtriſe:
" So may the ſad relation be believ'd,
" Which from experience deeply wounded flows,
" That thy ſuperior virtue, undeceiv'd,
" May ſcorn the ſemblance faithleſs manhood ſhows,
" Their vows, their ſighs, and all the flatt'ring arts
" By which they, ſkill'd, betray deluded virgin-hearts!"

CX.

She ceas'd, as if oppreſs'd; nor longer ſpoke,
With ſad remembrance inward ſo ſhe pain'd;

She

She droop'd her head—a flood of anguiſh broke,
And ſcarce her form the ſigns of life retain'd;
While Canace beſtow'd a tender tear,
To ſee the wretched falcon's hapleſs ſtate;
With kiſſes oft ſhe ſought her griefs to cheer,
Careſs'd her gently, and bewail'd her fate:
Till kindneſs does reviving warmth infuſe,
And thus the penſive bird the ſong of woe renews.

CXI.

" Where rapid Nieſter rolls his noiſy wave,
" High in a marble cliff that brow'd the flood,
" My peaceful birth indulgent nature gave,
" Securely there our neſt paternal ſtood:
" I liv'd my honour'd parents' dear delight,
" Cheriſh'd with ſylvan fruits and choiceſt grain;
" My youth they form'd, and taught my early flight,
" To ſkim the wood, or circle o'er the plain.
" Of all the numerous natives of the ſky,
" None (ſo bethought me) ſeem'd ſo bleſt and glad as I.

CXII.

" By fortune favour'd, and by nature free,
" Artleſs I flew where health and pleaſure call'd;

" No fears alarm'd, no dangers threaten'd me;
" No ſickneſs griev'd, nor ſervitude inthrall'd:
" Form'd to ſincerity, my honeſt thought
" No guile imagin'd, as no guile it knew;
" Too fond belief!—which future miſchiefs wrought,
" And into woe my heedleſs footſteps drew:
" For ſuch the fate of the moſt candid mind,
" True honour needs no vows—no vows can falſehood bind.

CXIII.

" Not diſtant far, by the deſcending ſtream,
" A tercelet held his wood-enſhelter'd neſt;
" Much of his manners ſpoke propitious fame,
" As every virtue had adorn'd his breaſt.
" Thus prepoſſeſs'd—delighted I beheld,
" So full of gentle courteſy he ſeem'd;
" All former obſervation ſtood excell'd,
" I ſaw—admir'd—reflected—and eſteem'd:
" Nor judg'd ſuch carriage with deſtructive ſhow
" Conceal'd a darkſome well of treaſon hid below!

CXIV.

" As where gay flowers in wild profuſion riſe,
" Th' emboſom'd ſerpent glides his wily head;

" Replete

" Replete with malice till the time he ſpies,
" When unperceiv'd he may his venom ſhed:
" So with fair ſemblance of unfelt delight
" This fly deceiver conſtant duty paid;
" Early or late he faithful watch'd my flight,
" With zeal conducted, and with care obey'd:
" So us'd each artifice my heart to move
" This monſter of his kind—this hypocrite in love.

CXV.

" Yet, while his tenderneſs my mind ſurveys,
" I wonder not that, fooliſh, I believ'd:
" Yet, when I think on his engaging ways,
" I ſcarce know how to call myſelf deceiv'd:
" So upright to appearance his intent,
" So far his conduct ſeem'd from ſelfiſh view,
" Diſhonour might have wonder'd what it meant,
" And bluſh'd to wear a livery ſo true:
" So fair to light the ſtately tomb remains,
" That in its loathſome vault the ſpoils of death contains.

CXVI.

" Thus for ſucceſſive years, with humble air,
" This wretch diſloyal holy love profan'd;
" With conſtant vows ſtill won my open ear,
" Till by degrees my yielding mind he gain'd:

" To

" To hear his plaintive tale beneath the ſhade,
" Pleas'd have I oft conſum'd the ſummer's day!
" Still the fond tale a freſh impreſſion made,
" And more enamour'd ſtill I went away!
" With female pride prevailing pity ſtrove,
" And what was friendſhip firſt, now ſoften'd into love.

CXVII.

" Yet in my weakneſs, virtue ſtill I ey'd;
" Nor loſt its native purity my heart.
" Love, though he fetter'd, led me not aſide,
" And virgin chaſtity maintain'd its part:
" Though choice inthron'd him in my conſcious breaſt,
" The beſt, the deareſt of his noble kind;
" Lord of my wiſhes though he reign'd confeſt,
" His empire ſtill was bounded by the mind
" In me, unblemiſh'd honour lent the fire
" The mutual flame to feed—I thought ſhould ne'er expire.

CXVIII.

" Thus won by ſeeming love, and vain deſert,
" My mind deluded graſp'd its fatal chain:
" I fear'd no treachery, void of ev'ry art;
" Lov'd as I was, I joy'd to love again.

" So,

" So, in the ſight of heav'n and conſcious day,
" We mutual, one unalter'd paſſion ſwore.
" Ne'er did till then the traitor ſeem ſo gay,
" Ne'er felt my harmleſs breaſt ſuch joy before:
" As when I yielded all my heart as free,
" As ſimple I believ'd he his had given to me!

CXIX.

" But well this truth-prophetic love has read,
" *A thief and faithful lover think not one.*"
" For ſoon as he beheld his conqueſt made,
" Increaſing ſhow of tranſport he put on;
" Before my feet in ſeeming trance he lay,
" And though deep ſilence all his ſpeech ſuppreſs'd,
" With falſe delight I ſaw his pinions play,
" And his fond eye his happineſs confeſs'd.
" Convinc'd to demonſtration I remain'd—
" No mortal lover yet ſo well the paſſion feign'd!

CXX.

" Not Paris, who th' Idalian nymph betray'd;
" Not Troilus, who inconſtant Creſſide won;
" Not Jaſon, who deceiv'd the Colchian maid;
" Nor Lamech, firſt who choſe two wives for one;
" Not Adam, who for one his Eden loſt,
" With all the ſons of his degen'rate race,

" Could

" Could equal art with this impoſtor boaſt,
" Or act the counterfeit with ſuch a grace.
" Such was his ſpecious ſhadowing of diſguiſe,
" No woman had eſcap'd, had ſhe been e'er ſo wiſe!

CXXI.

" No wonder then, if I, all unadvis'd,
" Whom no experience caution'd to beware;
" If unſuſpecting I was ſoon ſurpris'd,
" And heedleſs caught in the deluſive ſnare:
" If ſimple, charm'd with love's attractive ſhow,
" Its new-born pleaſure, and deceitful ſweet,
" My heart unguarded open'd to the foe,
" And cheriſh'd in itſelf the fatal heat;
" Our thoughts, our pains, our wiſhes ſeem'd the ſame;
" New love appear'd to raiſe a more enduring flame!

CXXII.

" Thus twice the ſun renew'd the ſmiling year,
" And ſaw our mutual ſoft endearments crown'd.
" His ſight, my bliſs; his ſafety, all my fear;
" In him was ev'ry other object drown'd.
" Had I a ſigh he ſeem'd not to divide?
" Had he a pain I made not all my own?

" I held

" I held him more than all the world beſide;
" I liv'd—I wiſh'd to live for him alone!
" Dearer he was to me in ev'ry part,
" Than was the vital ſtream that circled round my heart!

CXXIII.

" Near the lone ruins of a waſted tow'r,
" Encompaſs'd by the river's murm'ring fall,
" Oft were we wont to paſs the evening-hour,
" Safe in the ſhelter of the ivy'd wall:
" There was our meeting fix'd that hapleſs day,
" Happy, whoſe light theſe eyes had never ſeen,
" Slow paſs'd to me the tedious time away,
" Till the deep ſhadows darken'd half the green;
" Impatient I obſerv'd the night's increaſe,
" And ere th' appointed time I wing'd me to the place.

CXXIV.

" There I the traitor found, who penſive ſtood,
" Perch'd on a turret, as to mark my flight:
" Sad ſeem'd his aſpect; drooping was his mood;
" Ne'er had I ſeen him in ſuch heavy plight.
" Trembling, I aſk'd the cauſe; but aſk'd in vain,
" Foreboding; ſilence gave me nought to know.

" I preſs

" I preſs him to reply, Whence roſe his pain?
" His eyes reſponſive only told his woe:
" Till with a forc'd conſtraint, and piercing look,
" His feeble voice he rais'd; and, thus prepar'd, he
ſpoke.

CXXV.

' Hard is the lot the bolder male attends,
' Where dangers threat by honour forc'd to go;
' While nature kind your ſofter ſex defends,
' And guardian-beauty ſhields from ev'ry blow.
' Love, weeping love, can tell with what regret
' Reluctant I obey the tyrant-guide;
' How much I wail the rigour of my fate,
' That tears me, gentle charmer, from thy ſide.
' Judge thou the ſtrife, and with impartial aim,
' Save (if thou canſt) my peace, or vindicate my
fame.'

CXXVI.

" He ceas'd—unuſual horror ſeiz'd my breaſt,
" A mix'd confuſion, never felt before:
" Scarce my dim eye the riſing grief repreſs'd:
" I lov'd his ſafety, but his honour more.
" When death prevailing rends the tortur'd heart,
" And hovers o'er the ſight his dreadful ſhade,

" Such

" Such at that inſtant was my ſpeechleſs ſmart;
" Such was the anguiſh on my ſenſes prey'd.
" Firm as I could I yet withheld a cry,
" And thoughtful thus I made, determin'd, my reply.

CXXVII.

' Though love can ill this ſudden ſhock ſuſtain,
' And never love as yet exceeded mine!
' Yet ſince thy glory calls thee from the plain,
' Content I ſacrifice my will to thine.
' Complaints are vain;—where fame invites thee, go:
' Yet for my ſake, amidſt the warrior ſtrife,
' Heav'n from thy head avert each pointed blow,
' And with thy ſafety bring me more than life!
' For this each morning oriſon ſhall riſe;
' For this each ev'ning hymn invoke the guardian ſkies.

CXXVIII.

' Yet though harſh fate for years prolong thy ſtay,
' Love conſtant ſhall ſupply my faithful flame.
' Then, as if loſt but the preceding day,
' Still wilt thou find my tenderneſs the ſame.
' When the pure ſoul a chaſte affection binds,
' Nor time, nor death the union can impair;

' Heav'n

' Heav'n pleas'd ſurveys the ſympathy of minds,
' That, like itſelf, enkindles brightly fair.
' Fly then to conqueſt—fortune be thy guide!
' Of this aſſur'd, no pow'r our faith ſhall e'er divide.'

CXXIX.

" What need I, princeſs fair, deſcribe his ſhows,
" His varied action, and his fond diſcourſe?
" His vows repeated, and diſſembled woes?
" *Who could ſpeak better? Who could practiſe worſt?*
" Such was his agony—ſo deep his cries;
" Such all the ſhapes of his experienc'd art;
" That more inſtructed thought, and wiſer eyes,
" Perhaps had ſeen he over-did his part.
" But innocence my weaker judgment bound:
" *None treaſon well can know, but who has treaſon found.*

CXXX.

" Doleful we parted on the gloom of night,
" With weary wing my wind-rock'd neſt I ſought;
" He vig'rous ſouthward urg'd his rapid flight,
" With new direction, and inconſtant thought.
" Well had he learn'd this maxim of mankind,
" That no reſtraint the appetite could cool:

" That

" That the ſoft paſſion languiſhes confin'd;
" But when directed, free by beauty's rule,
" (As fancy leads) exerts a nobler aim;
" With novelty ſupplies the ſtill reviving flame!

CXXXI.

" Like as the fooliſh bird, who wild incag'd,
" (Though kind you tend him, and though fond you feed)
" Yet bears his loſs of liberty enrag'd,
" Nor all your gentle uſage deigns to heed:
" Were you to line his priſon-bars with ſilk,
" Diſdainful ſhall he tear the trophies up;
" Were you to mix his meſs of honey'd milk,
" He loaths the dainties, and he ſpurns the cup.
" But give him leave—the libertine ſhall rove,
" To feed on vileſt worms, a vagrant in the grove.

CXXXII.

" 'Twas ſo this tercelet, whom I once eſteem'd
" A miracle of conſtancy and truth,
" (Such as in virtue counterfeit he ſeem'd
" With all the ſplendour of unblemiſh'd youth!)
" Fir'd by no proſpect of ſuperior fame,
" But led by vain deſire of wanton change,

" He ſhunn'd my ſight, forgot his ancient flame,
" In ſearch of lawleſs pleaſure wild to range.
" A wretched kite had ſtruck his fickle eye;
" A kite! the coarſeſt bird that wings the midway ſky!

CXXXIII.

" So ſpoke report—nor I the tale believ'd,
" So much my heart was wedded to its foe;
" Till by my own enquiry undeceiv'd,
" My error late I found, I found it ſo!
" Then firſt I knew, not love the paſſion bred,
" Whoſe ſemblance fair this hypocrite expreſs'd;
" But phantaſy the idle vapour fed,
" A meteor vain of gallantry at beſt.
" A real tenderneſs can ne'er decline;
" Of genuine virtue ſtill is conſtancy the ſign.

CXXXIV.

" Thus now this kite my wanderer enjoys,
" Forgetful of his violated vows;
" More artful ſhe, perhaps, her pow'r employs,
" To ſeize the kind occaſions love allows;
" To try if real be the wooer's pain,
" By wiles that ev'n his artifice may blind;
" To practiſe coyneſs, and to act diſdain,
" Arts never ſuited to my plainer mind;

" Whoſe

" Whoſe innocence alone ſupports its grief,
" Till heav'n ſhall end my woe, or timely ſend relief!"

CXXXV.

More had ſhe ſpoke, but as ſhe thus bewail'd,
Prevailing anguiſh gain'd the dubious ſway;
Short grew her breath; her little ſpirits fail'd,
And in the princeſs' lap ſhe dy'd away!
Mov'd at the ſight, the nymphs with buſy care,
To give the mourner and their miſtreſs eaſe;
Who ſafe conveys her from the dang'rous air,
And homeward with a gentle pace conveys;
Where in her own apartment ſafely plac'd,
The wounded bird ſhe leaves, its juſt repoſe to taſte.

CXXXVI.

Next Canace humane her thought beſtows,
From ev'ry potent herb and root to chooſe
Ingredients bland, the med'cine to compoſe,
And in the ſores the balm of health infuſe:
Recov'ring ſoon, beneath her watchful eye,
The gentle bird a fairer face aſſumes,
Her wounds recloſe, ſhe ſhews external joy,
And with new life her varied plumage blooms.
Grateful, her fair deliv'rer is confeſs'd,
She ſips her roſy lip, and flutters round her breaſt!

CXXXVII.

Yet but imperfect pleaſure ſhe reveal'd,
A cloud of anguiſh darken'd ſtill her mien;
In vain with fond endeavour ſhe conceal'd
The melancholy grief that reign'd within:
With friendly zeal the gen'rous princeſs ſtrove
To cure this deeper wound which ſorrow made,
To cool the fever of conſuming love,
Which ſlowly waſting on her quiet prey'd:
And ſought, by reaſon calm, and mild diſcourſe,
To mitigate the deep diſeaſe's rooted force.

CXXXVIII.

Cloſe by her fair alcove's projected ſide,
She for the fav'rite bird a mew prepares;
Adorn'd with all the elegance of pride;
Of gold the wires, of gold the fretted bars:
In gold the cryſtal ewer ſhe encas'd,
A figur'd vaſe of gold contain'd her food;
Her cage around with golden foliage grac'd,
Of gold the poliſh'd perch on which ſhe ſtood;
Hung o'er a canopy of velvet-blue,
The emblem ſweet of hope, and perſeverance true!

CXXXIX.

Full in a rich entablature oppos'd,
Depicted was there many a faithleſs fowl;

There

There in their proper colours ſtood diſclos'd
The fickle tercelet, and the treach'rous owl.
The caitiff cuckoo flew attended there,
Whom all the feather'd tribes avoid with ſcorn;
Nor fail'd the tell-tale daw, or prattling ſtare
The enigmatic portrait to adorn:
High in the centre was the jay eſpy'd,
Who ap'd their ſev'ral airs—well practis'd to deride.

CXL.

Here ſhall we leave, how, by Camballo's care,
Return'd the falcon with repentant wing;
Nor yet the mirror's wondrous pow'rs declare;
Nor the ſword's virtues to reſtore the king:
Nor of Cambuſcan's conqueſts yet diſcourſe;
Whence gain'd Algarſife Thedora to wife,
Great peril 'ſcaping through the brazen horſe:
Theſe we defer—to tell Camballo's ſtrife,
And how three mighty brethren he ſurpaſs'd;
Then where we firſt began, ſhall we conclude at laſt.

* *Cætera multa deſiderantur.*

* What follows is continued by Mr. Ogle, from the fourth book of Spenſer's Fairy Queen.

CXLI.

WIDE ſpread the fame of Canace the fair,
Held of her ſex moſt learned in her days;
Her ring diſcloſing ev'ry ſcience rare,
And ev'ry ſecret work of nature's ways.
The voice of beaſts and birds, or wild, or tame,
The pow'r of herbs and plants ſhe fully knew:
But what augmented more her other fame,
(Though dark events lay open to her view)
She modeſt was in all her deeds and words;
And wondrous chaſte of life, though lov'd of knights and lords.

CXLII.

Her many a lord, and many a knight her lov'd;
But ſhe to none of them her liking lent;
Nor ever was with fond affection mov'd;
No ſingle look once out of order went;
So well her thoughts all lawleſs paſſions rul'd,
For love of honour, or for dread of blame;
And, or extinguiſh'd quite, or duly cool'd,
She ſmother'd, or ſhe never felt the flame:

Her

Her eyes like wary centinels well ſtay'd,
Still watch'd on ev'ry ſide, of ſecret foes afraid.

CXLIII.

So much the rather, as ſhe ſhunn'd to love,
So much the rather, ſhe to love was ſought;
What fail'd not much unquiet ſtrife to move,
And 'midſt her ſuitors frequent conteſts wrought.
That oft for her in bloody arms they fight,
Encount'ring danger for the thankleſs maid;
Whom, when Camballo (wiſe and valiant knight!)
Perceiv'd, he nor could temper nor diſſuade;
From ills he could not help, he caſt to raiſe,
And turn both him and her to honour and to praiſe.

CXLIV.

One day that met this troop of warlike merit,
Amongſt them all he made this fix'd decree;
(All men of paſſion, and all men of ſpirit;
The harder ſo to make them well agree:)
"Be this the hour, to fix my ſiſter's choice;
"Be of the crowd that to her bed pretend,
"Three choſe, the ſtouteſt call'd by common voice,
"The ſtouteſt of the three the ſtrife ſhall end.

" Then each with me ſhall combat for her ſake;
" The victor of them all our Canace ſhall take."

CXLV.

Bold was the challenge, as himſelf was bold,
With courage full of daring and emprize,
Approv'd in acts too num'rous to be told,
Whence laſting honours to his mem'ry riſe.
But what ſecur'd him of the wiſh'd event,
Whence, though full brave, ſome confidence might ſpring,
Was the ſure aid his royal ſiſter lent,
The influence of her rarely-gifted ring;
That 'mongſt the many virtues which we read,
Had pow'r to ſtaunch all wounds that mortally did bleed.

CXLVI.

So was that ring's great virtue known to all;
That dread of this, and his redoubted might,
Did all that youthly rout ſo much appall,
That none of them durſt undertake the fight.
More wiſe they ween'd to make of love a play,
Than life to hazard for fair lady's grace;
While yet uncertain (ſhould they gain the day)
They in her ſight might hope the foremoſt place.

Though

Though for her ſake they all that peril ran,
Who could be ſure of her, or think himſelf the man?

CXLVII.

Among the lovers were three brethren bold—
Three bolder brethren never yet were born!
Born of one mother, in one happy mould;
Born at one burthen, in one happy morn.
Thrice happy morn, thrice happy mother, hail!
That brought three ſuch, three ſuch not to be found;
Three males united as one ſingle male!
The firſt was Priamondo, far renown'd;
Nor leſs the ſecond, Diamondo nam'd;
With Triamondo laſt, yet equally as fam'd.

CXLVIII.

Stout Priamondo, not ſo ſtrong to ſtrike;
Strong Diamondo, not ſo ſtout a knight;
But Priamondo, ſtout and ſtrong alike.
On horſe would Triamondo chooſe to fight;
Felt Priamondo beſt on foot his force,
And ſo delighted to maintain his ground;
To Diamondo equal foot or horſe.
With curtax deep would Diamondo wound;

And

And Triamondo handled ſpear and ſhield;
But curtax, ſhield and ſpear would Priamondo wield.

CXLIX.

Theſe brothers lov'd each other wondrous well,
And by ſuch firm affection were ally'd,
As if one ſoul might in three boſoms dwell,
And in three equal parts her pow'rs divide.
Like three fair arms, uniting as they ſpread,
That from one root their vital ſap derive,
They crown their mother with one tow'ring head;
And, like the root that bids them bloom and thrive,
Such was their mother! at one happy birth
Three ſons producing, three, the nobleſt ſons of earth!

CL.

Of ſecret things their mother had the ſkill,
Knew nature's laws; a nymph of fairy kind:
Hence by her art could model to her will,
And to her uſe each living creature bind.
Thereto ſhe was right fair to mortal eye,
Liſt ſhe to mortal eye to ſhow how fair;
Tempting to touch, and charming to deſcry;
Her ſtature goodly, delicate her air.

But

But ſhe, as wont the nymphs of ſylvan race,
In foreſts ſpent her days, and lov'd in wilds to chaſe.

CLI.

There on a day, a noble youthly knight,
Adventures ſeeking in the ſavage wood,
By great good fortune got of her the ſight,
As ſhe ſat careleſs by a cryſtal flood:
And on her unawares he lay'd his hand,
Combing her locks, her head to new-array:
In vain ſhe ſtrove his ardour to withſtand;
The too intemp'rate youth would have his way.
Oppreſſing her by force (as bards have told)
Three lovely ſons he got, that prov'd three champions bold.

CLII.

Theſe long ſhe foſter'd in the lonely wood,
Till to the ripeneſs of man's ſtate they grew,
Then ſhowing forth ſigns of their father's blood;
Arms firſt they love, adventures then purſue.
Adventures, where they knew to ſeek, they ſought,
Which, for their ſafety, pain'd their mother's mind;
For though their pow'rs they prov'd, and wonders wrought,
Yet he that ſeeks miſchance, miſchance may find.

For

For he that danger rather courts than ſhuns,
The greater is his heart, the greater hazard runs.

CLIII.

For this ſhe wiſh'd the number of their days
To know, and to enlarge with long extent;
By wondrous ſkill, through ſubterraneous ways,
Down to the manſion of the Fates ſhe went:
Down to the bottom of the deep abyſs,
Far under ground ſhe went to realms of night,
Where Demogorgon ſits in gloomy bliſs,
Far from the eye of heav'n, or view of light,
And rules the hideous chaos; there ſhe hies,
The Fates to try; where hid their dreadful dwelling lies.

CLIV.

She found them there, all ſeated in a round;
Full in the midſt the direful diſtaff ſtands;
Where, drawing out the lines of life, ſhe found
The fatal ſiſters, with unwearyd hands.
Sad Clotho held the rock; the vital twine
With pain by griefly Lacheſis was ſpun;
But ah! how ſoon was all their fair deſign,
How ſoon, by cruel Atropos undone!

With

With fteel accurſt ſhe cut the twiſt in twain:
Moſt wretched man, whoſe days depend on threads ſo vain!

CLV.

Ent'ring ſhe bow'd, and bending fate to reſt;
Their labour then ſurvey'd with anxious grace:
And comprehending ſoon, the Fates addreſs'd,
Trembling in heart, and looking pale in face.
To tell her cauſe of coming ſhe began—
To whom fierce Atropos; "Intruder bold!
"That ſearch the ſecrets of the life of man;
"That dare from mortal what is hid behold:
"Well worthy thou to be of Jove accurſt,
"And ſhorten'd of their twine thy ſons in ſecret nurſt."

CLVI.

Whereat ſhe, ſore afraid, the fates beſought
Pardon to grant, and rigour to abate,
And pray'd to ſee how ſtrong their twine was wrought,
And know the utmoſt meaſure of their date.
This Clotho grants; ſo deſtiny ordain'd;
And gives her to inſpect the fated line:
The mother to the ſoul was inly pain'd,
Nor could forbear to murmur and repine;

Spun

Spun were their threads, ſhe thought, as ſpiders ſpin,
As thin as webs they ſeem'd, and yet as ſhort as thin.

CLVII.

For longer meaſure, and for ſtronger thread,
She ſtrait began the ſiſters to engage;
That ſo their lives might be prolong'd (ſhe ſaid);
But Lacheſis as ſoon began to rage:
"Deem you alike, fond dame (the goddeſs cry'd),
"Alike, of human things, and things divine?
"That alter'd they may be? (oh mortal pride!)
"And chang'd at pleaſure, for thoſe ſons of thine?
"Not ſo; for what the deſtinies decree,
"Not all the gods can force, nor Jove himſelf can free."

CLVIII.

'If then the term of life (the nymph rejoin'd)
'Can neither be or leſſen'd or enlarg'd;
'Grant this (this grant will eaſe a mother's mind)
'With either's ſoul be either's body charg'd.
'So when you doom the eldeſt of the three,
'(Whoſe life I ſee is ſhorteſt) paſs his ſoul;
'Transfer it to the ſecond in degree;
'And let the third and laſt poſſeſs the whole.
'Thus each in other ſhall his life prolong,
'In life of other, each ſhall thus be trebly ſtrong.'

The

CLIX.

The careful ſiſters granted her requeſt;
With full-contented mind the nymph departs.
Return'd, ſhe meets her ſons in armour dreſt,
Not to her wiſh, nor knew they of her arts.
From them conceal'd ſhe what the Fates deſign'd,
And how their lives were lengthen'd fear'd to tell;
Yet oft as fair occaſion ſhe could find,
She bids ſon truſt to ſon, whate'er befel.
"Let brother on his brother's ſafety wait,
"Give love for love, my boys, whate'er your future fate."

CLX.

And firm in friendſhip liv'd they all their days,
Raſh diſcord never ent'ring either mind;
Which added much to all their other praiſe,
And now in love of Canace they join'd.
; by affection natural 'twas agreed,
Each could not but approve what each approv'd;
d though ſame likings ſure averſions breed;
lere lov'd they more, becauſe alike they lov'd.
ce the dire conflict grew including all,
oft) great matter growing from beginning ſmall.

O! why

CLXI.

O! why do wretched men ſo much deſire
To draw their days to the remoteſt date?
Why do not rather wiſh them to expire,
Knowing the certain miſ'ry of their ſtate?
Toſs'd like the veſſel on the ſurging wave,
What ills await them, threat'ning to devour!
One danger from the cradle to the grave
Attends; for death attends them ev'ry hour!
And who moſt happy ſeems, and leaſt complains,
Is yet as near his end as he that ſuffers pains!

CLXII.

For this I hold the nymph more fond than ſage,
Her children's life thus ſeeking to prolong;
To lengthen miſ'ry, ſhe would lengthen age:
But ſhe that means the right, can act no wrong.
And happy each in other breath'd the three,
Of other each approving and approv'd;
So courteous each with other to agree,
It made them more eſteem'd of friends they lov'd;
And each with other ſo for valour priz'd,
It made them dreaded more of foes whom they deſpis'd.

CLXIII.

Theſe three that hardy challenge took in hand,
With great Camballo to maintain the fight;

The

The day was ſet, that all might underſtand,
And pledges pawn'd, as claim'd the martial rite.
That day (and ne'er was day of equal dread
Known, or to thoſe before, or thoſe ſince born!)
Soon as the face of heav'n was ſtreak'd with red,
Theſe warlike champions hail the riſing morn;
And, glorious as the ſun, in armour ſhine,
Aſſembling in the field, the challenge to define.

CLXIV.

The field with liſts was all around inclos'd,
To bar the preſs of people far away;
And at one ſide ſix judges were diſpos'd,
To view and deem the deeds of arms that day.
Freſh in array, and beautiful to fight,
Fair Canace adorn'd a ſtately ſtage,
Rais'd oppoſite; the fortune of the fight
Engag'd to ſee: her beauty was the gage;
There to be ſeen, as his moſt worthy wife
Who purchas'd her full fair, at venture of his life.

CLXV.

Camballo enter'd firſt the liſted ſpace,
With ſtately ſtep, that ſcorn'd the pow'r of chance;
As ſure of conqueſt, fearleſs was his face:
As fearleſs, though leſs ſure, the three advance.

Their 'ſcutcheons richly gilt, and, ſtreaming high,
Their banners, that on day reflected day.
Thrice marching round the liſt, they charm'd the eye,
Such was their manly port, and brave array.
Thrice bow'd they lowly to the noble maid,
The while the trumpets ſhrill, and loud the clarions play'd.

CLXVI.

Advanc'd the challenger with hardy ſtride,
All arm'd to point, his challenge to maintain;
Him Priamondo met with equal pride,
To point all arm'd, to take it in diſdain.
A trumpet blew: ſtrait cloſing hand to hand,
With furious force and fell intent they met,
Careleſs of peril in the furious ſtand;
Life they expos'd, as life had been a debt:
A debt ſo deeply 'gag'd, that they eſteem'd
'Twas folly now to ſpare, what could not be redeem'd.

CLXVII.

Well practis'd Priamondo was in fight,
And great his ſkill in uſe of ſpear and ſhield.
Nor leſs approv'd Camballo's martial might,
Nor leſs his ſkill or ſhield or ſpear to wield.

'Twas

'Twas hard to gueſs which was the hardier foe;
For equal ev'ry blow on either ſide,
And either ſide ſent death at ev'ry blow:
It ſeem'd that chance, not merit, muſt decide.
Each eyes the other with ſuch watchful care,
That ſhort falls ev'ry blow, or vainly glides in air.

CLXVIII.

Yet one of many with unlucky glance
(Of many one by Priamondo ſent)
Took place, directed leſs by aim than chance,
And paſſing through Camballo's ſhoulder went.
It went; his ſhield it forc'd him to forego.
Much was he griev'd, and rag'd with high diſdain:
Yet from the wound no blood he felt to flow,
But wondrous pain; his courage roſe with pain;
That urg'd his haughty ſoul to vengeance fell.
Smart daunts not mighty hearts, but makes them more to ſwell.

CLXIX.

With that, he bade his poignant javelin fly
Full at his foe, and cloſe beneath his ſhield;
It enter'd through his mail, and pierc'd his thigh;
The blood guſh'd forth, and ſtain'd the graſſy field.

With double force it flew, and reach'd the knight;
Much was the knight incumber'd with the wound;
To ſtand unable, or erect his height,
For here and there he reel'd along the ground.
So as the ſapleſs oak, through age declin'd,
Submits to ev'ry blaſt, and bends to ev'ry wind.

CLXX.

Soon as Camballo his condition ſpy'd,
Full at the ſpear he caught with all his might,
Meaning to draw, or thruſt from ſide to ſide,
And ſo at one attempt conclude the fight.
Deep was the point infix'd, and hard he drew;
Hard though he drew, ſtill back the foe reclin'd:
Freed from the weapon, on the knight he flew,
(Broke was the ſtaff, the head was left behind.)
At which the hero, more enrag'd than tam'd,
Re-charging him afreſh, thus ſcornfully exclaim'd.

CLXXI.

"Here, take the meed of thy miſchallenge, take!
"Thus long have I permitted thee to live;
"Not for thine own, but for thy ſiſter's ſake:
"A debt I might forbear, but not forgive."
The wicked weapon heard the wrathful vow,
And paſs'd to ſecond his vindictive ire,

His

His beaver pierc'd, and ſhiver'd on his brow,
That with the force it forc'd him to retire,
Then broke; half quiv'ring in his head-piece ſtood,
And half the owner held, and curs'd the treach'rous wood.

CLXXII.

The ſudden ſhock with rage Camballo bore;
And, where it ſtruck, from forth his beaver drew
The ſhorten'd ſpear, that pain'd him as he tore:
He drew, and back at Priamondo threw.
The faithleſs weapon found a ready way
To pierce his gorget where his neck was bare;
Where lies the pipe, commiſſion'd to convey
Freſh to the lab'ring breaſt the vital air.
Thence ſtreams of purple blood, the laſt of life,
Diſmiſs his weary ſoul, and end the doubtful ſtrife.

CLXXIII.

His weary ſoul, from earthly bondage freed,
Nor fled to heav'n, where ſome ſay ſpirits fly;
Nor vaniſh'd into air, as others plead;
Nor, chang'd into a ſtar, adorn'd the ſky;
Nor ſought direct (a ſolitary ſhade)
In Pluto's gloomy realm eternal reſt:

But through traduction (as his mother pray'd)
Paſs'd inſtantaneous to his brother's breaſt:
His brother next in order that ſurviv'd,
In whom he liv'd anew, of former life depriv'd.

CLXXIV.

He, when he ſpy'd him breathleſs on the field,
Was touch'd with ſorrow for his brother's fate;
Way to his ſorrow yet he ſcorn'd to yield,
But rather rous'd to vengeance and to hate.
Nor this the time to wail, or to condole;—
But fierce he ruſhes to renew the fight;
Through ſecret impulſe of his gen'rous ſoul,
As in reverſion of his brother's right:
And, challenging the virgin as his due,
The foe was ſoon addreſt; the trumpets freſhly blew.

CLXXV.

With that, together both ſo fiercely clos'd,
As limb from limb each other meant to rend;
Foot fix'd to foot, and hand to hand oppos'd,
Nor plate nor mail the hideous ſhow'r defend.
So deadlily they dealt their axes round,
Riv'd was the plate, and ſhatter'd was the mail;
Pain felt the one, the other dy'd the ground,
Fire flaſh'd from ev'ry blow, trail after trail;

As

As faſt as lightning after thunder flies:
That fill'd the crowded liſt with terror and ſurpriſe.

CLXXVI.

As when two tigers, prick'd with hungry rage,
Chance in the chace to meet the wiſh'd-for ſpoil,
On which they hope their famine to aſſuage,
And gain a feaſtful harveſt of their toil:
To make the juſt partition both refuſe,
And both conteſt the fortune of the day:
Hence ſtrife-full broil and cruel fight enſues,
While neither lets the other touch the prey;
And either ſcorns with other to partake:
So ſtrove theſe warlike knights, for this fair lady's ſake.

CLXXVII.

Full many a blow, and mortally deſign'd,
Was interchang'd; yet ſhort fell ev'ry blow;
For they were all ſo warded or declin'd,
That life in each ſtood fearleſs of her foe.
Till Diamondo, ſcorning long delay
Of wav'ring fortune, fix'd to neither ſide,
Reſolv'd to end the doubt at one eſſay,
And at one aim the battle to decide;

"Take this for Priamondo!" (fierce he ſpoke)
And heav'd his murd'rous axe, and gave a vengeful
ſtroke.

CLXXVIII.

The vengeful ſtroke had finiſh'd ſoon the ſtrife,
Sped, as was meant, ſo deadly was it meant!
Soon had it from the body forc'd the life;
But this Camballo's better fates prevent.
He mark'd him as he rais'd and lower'd his hand,
And judg'd the blow would fall with mighty ſway,
So ſwerv'd, as it arriv'd, and ſlipp'd his ſtand,
And ſudden to its fell intent gave way.
Miſſing the mark, to which his eye was bound,
Nigh fell'd him his right arm, his right foot plough'd
the ground.

CLXXIX.

As when a vulture, greedy of his prey,
By hunger preſt, and hunger heart can lend!
Strikes at a heron, in th' ethereal way,
On whom his feather'd forces downward bend;
Nought ſeems that can defend her from her foe:
Herſelf the fowl defends with wary care;
She ſpies him as he ſtoops, eludes the blow,
And makes him ſpend his wings in empty air;

That

That with his proper weight, deceiv'd in ſight,
Nigh to the ground he falls, and ſcarce recovers
flight.

CLXXX.

The fair occaſion when Camballo ſpy'd,
Full at the knight he drove with all his pow'r;
Ere for aſſault or ward he could provide;
And ſmote him with his axe in luckleſs hour.
With dire dexterity the ſtroke was ſped,
Then as recover'd, from his ſtoop, the foe;
And from his ſhoulders off it bore his head:
The headleſs trunk ſtood heedleſs of the blow!
A while it ſtood, as ſtill reſpiring breath,
Till feeling life to fail, it fell, and ſlept in death.

CLXXXI.

Amaz'd were the ſpectators of the field,
So long erect an headleſs trunk to ſee;
With arms, that, void of life, vain weapons wield,
Unknowing of the Fates' divine decree:
For though one ſoul from out his body fled,
'Twas that which from his brother he deriv'd;
And, but that thus diſmember'd of the head,
His body would have liv'd, and had reviv'd.

Where,

Where, as his ſoul no fitting manſion found,
The lifeleſs corſe is left to fall and ſpread the ground.

CLXXXII.

Yet left not either ſoul the doubtful ſtrife,
Nor yet retir'd to ſeat of heav'nly reſt;
But fill'd with double grief, and double life,
Their laſt lov'd manſion, Triamondo's breaſt!
Inly he felt a more than mortal ſmart,
And ſtrait he leap'd into the empty field,
With more than common ſtrength, or common heart;
And menac'd with his ſpear, and ſhook his ſhield.
Thus brave Camballo bravely he addreſs'd,
Who fac'd the foe, and ſoon the fight was cloſely preſs'd.

CLXXXIII.

Well might you wonder how that noble knight
Was able to ſuſtain wound after wound;
And what impower'd him to renew the fight,
And how on foot he could maintain his ground.
Yet had you then him forth advancing ſeen,
As fierce he ſeem'd, as freſh the field to take,
As had he been new-form'd, new-ſoul'd had been;
The ſemblance of the new-recruited ſnake,

That,

That, ſoon as ſpring diſpels the wintry cold,
Throws off his ragged ſkin, and ſhines in ſcales of gold.

CLXXXIV.

'Twas all through virtue of the ring he wore,
Whence wounded not a ſingle drop he bled;
His weaken'd ſtrength her working pow'rs reſtore,
The ſtone therein incas'd ſuch influence ſhed.
Elſe how could one of equal might with moſt,
With moſt of equal might, yet ſtill but one,
Before ſo many no leſs mighty boaſt;
And go the road to honour he had gone?
Or think to match three ſuch in equal fight?
Three ſuch, as match'd an hoſt; an hoſt in either knight!

CLXXXV.

Yet this in Triamondo rais'd no dread,
Nor yet of glorious vict'ry he deſpair'd;
But cloſing him, well arm'd from foot to head,
What man could do, he did; could dare, he dar'd.
Thick pour'd his blows, as hailſtones from the ſky,
On ev'ry ſide he ſtruck, hew'd, urg'd, and preſs'd;
All doubt or could he ſtand, or would he fly:
So faſt the foe his iron axe addreſs'd,

That

That ſparks of fire from ev'ry ſtroke enſue,
As faſt as from the rock the ſprays of briny dew.

CLXXXVI.

Much was Camballo daunted with the blows,
So thick they fell, ſo forcibly were ſent,
Conſtrain'd (to ſuch a height his fury roſe)
Back to retire, and ſomewhat to relent.
Safer he judg'd to ward than to withſtand
The rage of paſſion, riſing in its courſe;
He waits his ſhorter breath, and lighter hand,
Then freſh aſſails him with ſuperior force:
That caus'd the foe, abated of his heat,
Faſt forward as he preſs'd, now backward to retreat.

CLXXXVII.

As when the tide, from ocean newly ſped,
Flows up the Shenan with contrary courſe;
O'er-rules the ſtream, in his own wat'ry bed,
And makes him ſeem to have an adverſe ſource:
Back tow'rds his ſpring the current re-aſcends,
And borders lately paſs'd again ſurveys;
But when again the flood its vigour ſpends,
Then back his borrow'd waters he repays,
And ſends the ſea his own with double gain,
And tribute, with his own, as ſov'reign of the main.

Various

CLXXXVIII.

Various as theſe, the tides of battle flow,
With diverſe fortune doubtful to be deem'd;
Now this the better had, now had his foe;
Then one half vanquiſh'd, then the other ſeem'd.
Yet victor each himſelf in valour thought,
And held his rival dying, if not dead;
Felt many a pang Camballo, while they fought,
And blood abundant Triamondo ſhed;
That with the waſting of his vital flood,
Faintly he breath'd at heart, on foot he feebly ſtood.

CLXXXIX.

Camballo ſtronger ſtill and greater grew,
Nor felt his blood to waſte, nor pow'rs to fail;
From wounds new made he gather'd vigour new,
So much the virtues of the ring prevail.
Like as the tree, by blights or years,
Though wither'd to the trunk it droops the head,
Reviv'd, when prun'd with careful ſkill, appears,
And joys again to flouriſh and to ſpread;
New fruit producing from the huſband's toil,
As freſh as when it firſt was planted in the ſoil.

CXC.

Through like advantage in his ſtrength he roſe,
And ſmote with wondrous force the adverſe knight,

There,

There, where the ſeams the jointed hauberk cloſe,
That down he fell, as dead to human ſight.
Dead yet he was not; yet he ſuffer'd death;
Death ſure as ſuffers aught of mortal ſtate;
Felt the laſt ſtruggle of expiring breath,
And pay'd a life at the demand of fate:
For ſtrait one ſoul from out his body flies,
From human mis'ry freed, and ſeeks its native ſkies.

CXCI.

Meantime, while all that ſpy'd him deem'd him dead,
For viſible to all he ſeem'd to die,
As riſing from a dream he rear'd his head,
And ſudden on his foe began to fly.
At ſo uncouth a ſight, the foe amaz'd
Loſt pow'r of ſpeech, nor utt'rance could afford;
Unmov'd, as had he ſeen a ghoſt, he gaz'd,
And ſlow of action held his idle ſword:
Till ſtruck full oft by his impetuous arm,
To ſtrike he was conſtrain'd, to ſave himſelf from harm.

CXCII.

Yet from that hour more warily he fought,
In fear the Stygian gods to unbefriend;
As one to ſave himſelf that rather ſought,
Than faſt purſu'd another to offend;

Nor

Nor life, nor labour choſe to ſpend in vain.
When Triamondo found his cooler play,
He judg'd it follow'd or from fear or pain,
Ill able to ſupport the cloſing fray;
Or that the knight could ill on foot endure,
A ſign that muſt to him the vict'ry ſoon aſſure.

CXCIII.

Joy'd to the ſoul, on high he rais'd his hand,
In mind to give the laſt deciſive blow;
The foe to end, or fear'd he to withſtand,
Or dar'd he to withſtand, to end the foe.
Camballo mark'd him, not inclin'd to yield,
And nothing ſlow to ſave his threaten'd head;
His ſword he drew, and paſs'd his op'ning ſhield,
Slight was the op'ning, ſlight the paſs was ſped:
He ſtruck him, as to ſtrike his hand he rear'd;
Beneath his arm it went, and at his back appear'd.

CXCIV.

Yet Triamondo's axe purſued its way,
And fell full heavy on Camballo's creſt.
The hero in a ſwooning abſence lay;
An hideous wound was on his head impreſt.
His ſhield with brims of braſs was plated round,
And there it found a reſt, nor farther ſped;

Elſe

Elſe had the knight been cleav'd, and ſpread the ground,
Down to the breaſt diſſever'd from the head.
So both at once fell breathleſs on the field,
And each to other ſeem'd the vict'ry there to yield.

CXCV.

The crowd conclude the fight was at an end;
The marſhals of the field and judges roſe;
Wail'd Canace her brother as her friend;
They rend the trophies, and the liſts they cloſe:
Nought reſted but to ſpeak their fun'ral praiſe;
Aſcertain'd now by death the doubtful ſtrife;
When, lo! at once their living forms they raiſe,
One from his ring; one from his treble life;
And both together riſing (wondrous ſight!)
Freſh, other each aſſail'd, and fierce renew'd the fight.

CXCVI.

Each claiming then the other as his prize,
Begun, as had the fight but then begun;
Alike, ſtrokes, wounds, ſhields, weapons, they deſpiſe,
And danger rather try to find than ſhun.
Death fear'd they not, nor yet for life they car'd,
Life to let out alike, or death let in.

For

For death they valu'd not, nor life they ſpar'd,
Or who was to be won, or who to win:
More to be kill'd deſirous, than to kill;
To both life ſeem'd a load, and ſafety ſeem'd an ill.

CXCVII.

While thus the battle hung, a doubtful ſcale;
Unſure to whom the balance would decline,
Sad ev'ry heart, and ev'ry face grew pale,
The cloſe of all unwilling to divine;
All ſuddenly a clamorous noiſe they heard,
That ſeem'd ſome perilous tumult to portend;
As ſomething ſtrange at near approach appear'd,
And caus'd the crowd the vault of heav'n to rend,
With cries of women, and alarms of boys,
Such as the troubled theatre full oft annoys.

CXCVIII.

Each champion heard the clamour from afar,
But what it brought not ſudden could deviſe;
When, lo! they ſpy'd, fair ſeated on a car,
A maid, that could not fail to touch their eyes.
Faſt as a whirlwind drives, ſhe drives along,
And lovely was the virgin to behold:
Yet faſter way ſhe made amidſt the throng,
For that her car was all adorn'd with gold;

It ſeem'd as for ſome Perſian monarch plann'd,
With various gems enrich'd, and ſhow'd a maſter hand.

CXCIX.

Drawn was her car (what wondrous is to tell)
By two grim lions, ſubject to command;
And though they look'd in fierceneſs to excel
Their ſavage kind, yet tame they bore her hand.
Erect on foot, high rais'd the damſel ſtood,
And more than human ſeem'd to human ſight;
Bright as the dame that bore her in the wood,
She ſhone (and either ſhone as angel bright):
But with her beauty bounty might compare,
Which of the two might claim the greater ſhare.

CC.

The fair was daughter to th' enamour'd knight,
Who once again oppreſs'd the ſylvan maid;
Long had he watch'd to gain the pleaſing ſight,
Till unawares he caught her in the ſhade.
In magic lore the mother deeply ſkill'd,
Her child in all her ſubtle arts improv'd;
And now ſhe came, with kind affection fill'd,
To aid her brother, whom ſhe dearly lov'd.

In

In haſte ſhe came to pacify the ſtrife,
For bad the loſs or gain, where gain or loſs is life.

CCI.

Her as the crowd preſs'd nearer to behold,
Leſs tractable her ireful leaders grew;
Numbers they drove before, as ſheep to fold,
And numbers roll'd in duſt, for haſte o'erthrew;
That in the mix'd confuſion of the throng,
For fear of danger, ſome to diſtance fly;
For curioſity, ſome rac'd along;
Some for themſelves, and ſome for others cry;
Some laugh for fancy, ſome for wonder ſhout;
And ſome, that would ſeem wiſe, their wonder turn to doubt.

CCII.

In her right hand a rod of peace ſhe bore,
Around two ſerpents mutually were wound;
Bound firmly by the tail in lovely lore,
And both were with one olive garland crown'd.
Like to the wand that wields the ſon of May,
Seals he in ſleep the eye, or opes in light;
Draws he from hell the ſhade, or drives away
The ſoul from earth; day miniſt'ring or night.

489294

And in her other hand ſhe held a vaſe,
With choice nepenthe fill'd; a juice of ſov'reign grace!

CCIII.

Nepenthe! drink prepar'd by heav'nly art!
By gods devis'd, all ſorrow to aſſuage!
To chaſe the grief of ſoul, and gall of heart,
Whence ſpring ſore anguiſh and contentious rage!
To age it gives ſweet peace and quiet reſt;
Firm friendſhip and unalter'd love to youth;
The mind eſtabliſhes, and cheers the breaſt;
Reſerv'd for ſuch as wiſdom court and truth:
Few by the gods to taſte it are aſſign'd;
But all aſſign'd to taſte it, bliſs eternal find.

CCIV.

Such men of worth, deriv'd of mortal birth,
As mighty Jove advances to the ſky,
Gods for their merit made from ſons of earth,
Partake of this ere yet to heav'n they fly.
Secure of joys that will for ever laſt,
All mem'ry here they drown of human care;
All hope, or fear, of future, or of paſt;
Then, unrememb'ring, to the bleſt repair.

Heroes

Heroes of old of this were giv'n to taſte,
Ere yet among the gods immortal they were plac'd.

CCV.

Much more of price, and of more gracious pow'r,
This than the fountain in Ardenna found;
Of which Rinaldo drank in happy hour,
As ſings the Tuſcan poet, far renown'd.
For had that pow'r to change the bent of mind
From love to hate, a change of evil choice;
But this reverſe, from hate to love inclin'd;
Who would not to this virtue yield his voice?
Hate is of brutes, and what the gods deteſt;
But love the gift of heav'n, and glads the human breaſt.

CCVI.

Now cloſe beſide the liſt her leaders ſtand,
(And ſtrong incloſing bars the liſt ſurround)
She ſtrikes the bars, that open to her hand,
Then enter'd, quits her car, and takes the ground.
"Friendſhip and peace to all!" (the virgin cry'd)
"Friendſhip and peace! the greateſt good in life!"
Firſt to her brother was the wiſh apply'd,
Whom, ſorely griev'd, ſhe found in bloody ſtrife;

Laſt, to the foe, whoſe warlike air and grace,
Then, ſecret touch'd her ſoul, and dy'd her conſcious face.

CCVII.

Both ſlightly bow'd, (for ſmall was their delight,
As then, to entertain the lovely maid)
Then turn'd them to the battle: at the ſight,
Between them on the field herſelf ſhe laid.
With double hopes diſturb'd, and double fears,
Nought that could move the reconciler ſpares,
With ſighs now intermixing ſoft'ning tears,
And pow'rful reaſons adding now to pray'rs.
For cordial peace, from horrid war, ſhe fought,
By all they held moſt dear; by her for whom they fought.

CCVIII.

But when ſhe found ſhe could not ſo prevail,
She touch'd them lightly with her pow'rful wand;
Then ſudden as the hearts of cowards fail,
Down fall their wrathful ſwords, and motionleſs they ſtand;
They ſtand, as men poſſeſs'd with panic fright,
Struck with they know not what of dread ſurpriſe;

Thus

Thus ere their ſcatter'd pow'rs they could unite,
Or free their mighty ſouls from mightier ties,
Her golden bowl, with ſweet oblivion fraught,
She reach'd; and, glad for thirſt, each drank an hearty draught!

CCIX.

Soon as they taſted once the juice divine,
Wonder it was the ſudden change to ſee;
From deadly ſtroke in kind embrace they join,
And hands they plight, no more to diſagree;
In amity ſuch enmity to cloſe,
And foe with foe, as friend with friend to yield,
And faithful friends to riſe from mortal foes;
This turn of things amaz'd the crowded field;
The crowded field with joy and wonder riſe,
One loud applauſe enſues, re-echoing through the ſkies!

CCX.

When gentle Canace this ſees and hears,
In haſte ſhe from her lofty ſeat deſcends;
And ſoon amidſt the combatants appears,
To know if ſo the cruel conflict ends:
When certain found, all due reſpect ſhe pay'd,
In manner eaſy, and in ſpeech polite;

And, for her conduct, praiſing much the maid,
At Sarra begs her to diſpoſe the night;
And add this other favour to the reſt,
The friendſhip to accept, that firmly ſhe profeſs'd.

CCXI.

Agreed with true ſincerity of heart;
The trumpets ſounded, and the judges roſe;
With glee and gladſome cheer the crowd depart:
To march together both the champions choſe.
And both together choſe the maids to ride;
Cambina, prudent umpire of the day,
With ſweet affection taking to her ſide
Fair Canace, as freſh as roſe in May.
Thence to Cambuſcan's palace they retir'd,
By all applauded each, and each by all admir'd.

CCXII.

In perfect love there many a day they ſpend;
Camballo with Cambina led his life;
And who but Triamondo could pretend
A rightful claim to Canace as wife?
I paſs the joyous feaſts, the ſolemn rites,
Things well to be conceiv'd, though not expreſt;
The days of dalliance, and of bliſs the nights;
Suffice, that each in each was fully bleſt.

So

So join'd by love, and ſo by friendſhip bound,
That never ſince their days were four ſo happy found.

CCXIII.

It riſes oft in life (as here it roſe)
That mortal foes to faithful friends may turn;
And ſo may faithful friends to mortal foes;
As reaſons temper, or as paſſions burn.
For oft ſome dire miſtake miſleads the will,
As well in hate of foes, as love of friends;
Hence enmity, that not proceeds of ill,
But of occaſion, with th' occaſion ends;
And friendſhip, which a faint affection breeds
Without regard of good, dies like ill-grounded ſeeds.

CCXIV.

Meantime the ſun his due meridian height
Had gain'd, when neither loſt, yet either won;
While great Cambuſcan, who declin'd the fight,
Reſign'd to fate the daughter and the ſon.
The monarch thought fate order'd for the beſt.
But hold—'tis time to check the forward ſteed!
Nor ſhould our tale too long delay the reſt;
What yet remains in order may ſucceed,
When next our turn; intemperance of tongue
Mine Hoſt will well excuſe; his orator is young.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO THE

* FRANKLEIN'S TALE.

FAITH, gentle Squire, thou well, the Franklein ſaid,
Thy part haſt fill'd, and much thy wit diſplay'd;
Such power of words attain'd at ſuch an age
The happieſt fruits of eloquence preſage:
Soon ſhall, if right I gueſs, thy poliſh'd ſpeech
Perfection's arduous point unrivall'd reach.
Heaven keep thee, gentle youth, in laſting peace!
And may thy virtue with thy years increaſe!
Oh, might my longing eyes once hope to ſee
My graceleſs boy of worth approv'd like thee,

* Forteſcue (de L.L. Ang. c. 29) deſcribes a Franklein to be a "Pater familias magnis ditatus poſſeſſionibus." He is claſſed with (but after) the "Miles" and "Armiger," and is diſtinguiſhed from the "Libere tenentes" and "Valecti;" though, as it ſhould ſeem, the only real diſtinction between him and other freeholders conſiſted in the largeneſs of his eſtate.—TYRWHITT, v. 333.

What

What would I give! For what, my friends, avail
Huge heaps of wealth, where worth and virtue fail?
Full many a ſnub I've given him heretofore,
And fear, I've many a one to give him more:
For, long abſorb'd in pleaſure's giddy joys,
On cards and dice he every hour employs;
And rather would he jeſt with ſome low page,
Than with a gentle youth diſcreet and ſage,
Who, pleas'd to prove himſelf a faithful friend,
Might teach him ſoon his idle ways to mend.
Plague on your idle ways, replied our Hoſt:
Why, how now, Franklein? Surely, well thou know'ſt,
That we have each our promiſe given to tell
Some pleaſant tale or two.—I know it well,
The Franklein ſaid: but where's the great delay,
If to this youth a word or two I ſay?—
I tell thee, Franklein, without one word more,
Thy tale begin——Sire Hoſt! I own your power;
By no means would I wiſh to give offence;
And far as my poor wit can recompence
Your time and hearing, I will ſtrive to pleaſe,
And, if my tale does that, I am at eaſe.
Our generous ſires, the Britons, lov'd of old
To hear adventures ſtrange in ſtory told;

Or

Or feats of arms in pleaſing numbers ſung,
And, leaning on their ſpears, in rapture hung
On the ſweet accents of the minſtrel's tongue.
One of theſe tales I ſtill remember well,
Which, if it ſo you pleaſe, I now will tell.
But, ſirs, ere I begin, I this beſeech,
As I'm a man unlearn'd, and rude in ſpeech,
And ſkill in rhetoric could ne'er obtain,
That you'll excuſe my phraſe, which muſt be plain.
I ne'er on fam'd Parnaſſus' heights have play'd,
Nor Tully's rules divine have ever read;
And flowers I know of none, except indeed
Thoſe that ſo richly deck th' enamell'd mead;
For of the flowers of ſpeech I ne'er took heed.

THE FRANKLEIN'S TALE.

BUT to my tale.—There liv'd, for valour fam'd,
In once Armorica, now Bretagne nam'd,
A knight, who fear'd no toils nor feats to prove,
To win the guerdon of his lady's love.
But ere he could obtain the glorious meed,
For her he wrought full many a hardy deed;
Yet light he deem'd the heavieſt toils he bore,
Weigh'd with ſuch charms as ne'er were ſeen before.
Of lineage high the beauteous fair was born;
And long he fear'd, leſt haply ſhe might ſcorn
His humble ſuit, and long in vain he ſtrove
To check the ſighs that ſpoke his hopeleſs love.
At length, by pity mov'd, the gentle maid
With love's ſoft ſweet return his fears repaid;
Much ſhe his worth, his virtues all approv'd,
But moſt his tenderneſs of ſoul ſhe lov'd:
And now ſhe grants, that Hymen's ſacred bands
Shall join in union firm their faithful hands.
Then, rapture all, the youth did fondly plight
His honour's gage, that neither day, nor night,

No,

No, not in all his life, would he controul
Her ſmalleſt wiſh, but ever bend his ſoul
Obedient to her will, in guiſe the ſame
As yields the humbleſt lover to his dame;
Content, in ſhame of man's ſupreme degree,
To have the name alone of ſov'reignty.
With gracious ſmiles ſhe thank'd her courteous ſwain,
And, "Sir," ſhe ſaid, "ſince you ſo large a rein
"Thus kindly proffer, never cauſe of ſtrife,
"From fault of mine, ſhall vex our bliſsful life:
"But me you e'er ſhall find a duteous wife."
Secure in mutual vows thus both rely,
That joys unmix'd ſhall crown the nuptial tie:
And ſure, my friends, to thoſe who hope to prove
The laſting ſweets of undiminiſh'd love,
This truth ſhould fully and betimes be known,
That each to th' other's will muſt yield his own:
For free as air, and fleeting as the wind,
Love ne'er by tyrant force will be confin'd;
And, when he ſees prepar'd the galling ties,
"Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies:"
Hateful alike to every generous ſoul,
To women as to men, is harſh controul;

And

And he with ſureſt aim his end purſues,
Who rules with mildneſs, or with patience wooes:
For meek-ey'd Patience, ſo wiſe authors write,
Is fraught with virtues rare, and wondrous might;
And oft her mild and ſoftening arts attain
What churliſh rigour ever ſeeks in vain.
Learn to forgive; for, whether pleas'd or no,
Learn it ye muſt, or ſoon or late, I trow:
For where that man ſo perfect ſhall we find,
Who is not ſometimes peeviſh or unkind?
Anger inflames, and wine's benignant power
Is known the mildeſt breaſts too oft to ſour;
Pain racks the nerves, and, ah! who doth not know
Th' o'erpow'ring weight of ſoul-ſubduing woe?
Then let not each unaim'd or ſlight offence
To deep reſentment ever give pretence;
Nor let us e'er retain too ſtrict record
Of each ſmall wrong, or each injurious word.
Impreſs'd with thoughts like theſe, our knight ſo ſoon
Implor'd forgiveneſs, ere a fault was done;
And ſhe as wiſely to this law agreed,
That mutual pardon ſhould each wrong ſucceed.
The knight, when now the nuptial band was tied,
Home in glad triumph led his lovely bride,

To

To where in banner'd ſtate his caſtle ſtood,
Frowning defiance on the weſtern flood.
Who, but the happy few, to whom kind Heaven
The richeſt balm of envied life hath given,
The countleſs heartfelt pleaſures may relate,
Thrice honour'd Hymen! which thy favourites wait?
Such were the joys that bleſs'd this happy pair,
Whilſt through its varied round revolv'd a year;
'Twas then Arviragus (for ſuch the name
The hero boaſted in the liſts of fame),
Panting to win bright honour's deathleſs crown,
To England came, the ſeat of fair renown.
Who then may tell what direful woes oppreſs'd,
Oh, hapleſs Dorigene! thy labouring breaſt?
In vain with anxious care each pitying friend
Strove to her grief the kindlieſt balms to lend;
'Reft of her love, her ſoul reſolv'd to know
The pangs alone of unabating woe.
But as full oft the ſmalleſt drop is known
T' impreſs by ceaſeleſs fall th' obdurate ſtone;
So, won by frequent calls, at length her ear
Deign'd conſolation's ſoothing voice to hear.
Her much lov'd lord too, mindful to approve
The truth and firmneſs of his plighted love,

Had

Had tidings ſent, and bade her ceaſe to mourn,
And wait with cheerful hope his quick return.
Now from her ſoften'd brow diſpers'd the gloom,
Her native ſmiles once more her eyes illume;
And with fond joy, though long in vain implor'd,
Her friends behold her to their arms reſtor'd.
Oft o'er the rugged cliffs ſhe lov'd to roam,
Whilſt wide around the ſubject billows foam,
Pleas'd to purſue with keen and anxious eye
Each diſtant ſail, that almoſt touch'd the ſky:
Yet, though intent ſhe gaz'd, the flattering view
Did but her grief with livelier ſenſe renew.
Oft would ſhe thus in bittereſt anguiſh cry,
Is there not one among the hoſt I ſpy,
Not one kind ſhip, which o'er the raging deep
Will waft my lord, and bid my ſorrows ſleep?
Then would ſhe round her eyes deep-muſing throw,
Or fix them on the gulph that boil'd below.
But when the rocks in dire and drear array
Rais'd their black heads amid the wat'ry way,
Then would again her panting boſom beat,
Then fail with ſudden change her tottering feet;
And ſitting on the graſſy bank again,
Her eyes ſtill fix'd upon the roaring main,
She piteouſly would ſigh, and thus complain.

Father of heaven! whoſe wiſe and potent ſway
Theſe well rul'd worlds in order juſt obey;
Who mak'ſt, we're told, nought uſeleſs or in vain,
"Why do in ſeas theſe hideous rocks remain?"
For nought of fair creation theſe diſplay,
But toſs'd in ſhapeleſs heaps unſeemly lay;
No creature they, nor man, nor bird, nor beaſt,
No clime, nor north, nor ſouth, nor weſt, nor eaſt,
Do they e'er bleſs, no comfort ſweet afford,
But with pure evil they alone are ſtor'd.
Think of the thouſands, that in evil hour
Hav'n fall'n ſad victims to their ruthleſs power;
Form'd too were theſe in thine own likeneſs fair,
Once bleſt and deem'd not worthleſs of thy care:
Then on mankind did thy mild radiance ſhine,
And on the new-born race beam'd love divine:
Why then are now theſe engines dire employ'd?
And why thy faireſt work ſo ſoon deſtroy'd?
Wiſe clerks will ſay, though I no cauſe can ſee,
That that which is, is beſt, whate'er it be.
Be theirs the ſtrife of words; yet this I know,
'Tis Heaven that bids the bellowing winds to blow;
And though no caſuiſt, hence too clear I prove,
That heaven from theſe ſad arms ſtill keeps my love.

Save

Save him, ye powers! but oh! down, down, oh!
ſweep
Theſe hateful rocks beneath the gulphy deep!—
Thus was ſhe wont along the ſounding ſhore
In ceaſeleſs plaints her ſtubborn woes to pour:
From ocean's view her friends with added grief
Saw that her woes could hope no kind relief;
Still by new ſcenes and varied ſports they ſtrive
Each anxious thought from her rack'd breaſt to drive.
Now to the airy pipe's enliv'ning ſound
They beat with meaſur'd ſtep the echoing ground;
Now try, if haply aught the mimic fight
Of graver cheſs may yield of mild delight.
A garden fair there ſtood, which wanton May
Had taught her earlieſt bloſſom to diſplay;
Art's happy toils with ſelf-taught nature vied
To deck the ſcene in beauty's lovelieſt pride:
Here on a day the youths and maids reſort,
And the gay hours fly ſwift in rural ſport.
With them her friends the beauteous mourner led,
And hop'd the lovely ſcene ſoft balm might ſhed,
To ſooth her woes, while every art they uſe,
O'er her ſwoln breaſt ſweet comfort to diffuſe.

Around profuſe the dainty cates are pour'd,
And mirth and pleaſure grace the feſtive board.
Now to their ſports refreſh'd they quick repair,
With ſong and dance reſounds the gladden'd air;
Joy ſmiles o'er all, ſave Dorigene alone;
'Midſt the gay ſcene ſhe pours her ceaſeleſs moan;
For him, the deareſt ſource of all her pain,
She ſeeks along the dance, but ſeeks in vain.
Among the reſt a youth of aſpect rare
And comely mien appear'd; his jetty hair
In wanton ringlets o'er his ſhoulders flow'd,
And in his blooming cheek young vigour glow'd.
Skill'd too was he in every poliſh'd art,
That points with added ſting love's deſtin'd dart;
In ſong, in dance unrivall'd he excell'd,
And every heart in pleaſing bondage held.
Yet not alone in outward grace he ſhone,
Virtue and wiſdom were alike his own;
Aurelius he was nam'd, and long his heart
Had own'd the power of love's all conq'ring dart:
For Dorigene he ſigh'd, but ſigh'd unknown;
Ne'er had he dar'd his lawleſs flame to own,
Save what perchance his plaintive ſongs reveal'd,
For theſe would ſpeak the grief his lips conceal'd:

Sonnets,

Sonnets, enigmas, roundelays, he'd frame;
His ſong was various, but his theme the ſame.
Thus, and thus only ſometimes would he dare
His ſoul's deep ſorrows darkly to declare,
Save that erewhile amid the ſprightly dance,
His love-ſick eye would ſteal th' ecſtatic glance;
Or hang delighted on her beauteous face,
Like one who ſued for mercy's pitying grace.
It chanc'd meantime, ere yet the feſtive crew
From the gay garden's mirthful ſcenes withdrew,
'Neath a green alley's dark and awful ſhade,
For love or cooler contemplation made,
They met—Aurelius firſt the dame addreſs'd,
And thus with faultering tongue his pain expreſs'd.
"O! if kind fate on that ill omen'd day,
"Which bore thy lov'd Arviragus away,
"Me too had baniſh'd to ſome diſtant ſhore,
"Where I might ne'er have view'd thoſe beauties more!
"For hopeleſs is my grief, and well I know
"The life-drops of my heart, how vain they flow!
"Deign then my woes to view with pitying eye,
"And one kind word, oh! grant me, ere I die!"

Quick on Aurelius then her eyes ſhe turn'd,
While with diſdain her heaving boſom burn'd;
" And thou ſo long, baſe, treacherous man," ſhe cried,
" For this thy vile inſidious arts haſt tried!
" Know thou, that faith I owe my honour'd lord,
" No time ſhall weaken, or in deed, or word;
" But long as bounteous heaven ſhall grant me life,
" I will e'er prove a chaſte and duteous wife.
" This I reſolve"——but, with compaſſion feign'd,
She to his prayer at length this anſwer deign'd.
" Since, poor Aurelius! ſuch I ſee your pain,
" That you ne'er ceaſe thus ſadly to complain,
" Let one bold deed your warm pretenſions prove;
" For what's too hard for thoſe who truly love?
" Hear then my ſacred promiſe—on the day,
" When from the Britiſh coaſt you ſweep away,
" By force or potent art, yon rocky chain,
" That braves with ſullen ſcorn th' inſulting main;
" When this you've done, that o'er the gentle tide,
" From dangers freed, each ſhip may boldly ride;
" Then your warm wiſh completed you ſhall find,
" Then love ſhall ſmile, and Dorigene be kind."
" Is there none other grace?" he ſaid and ſigh'd:
" None, by that Lord that made me," ſhe replied.

" Then

"Then hopeleſs is the boon I've dar'd to aſk,
"For power of man can ne'er atchieve the taſk;
"Thus then I bow, condemn'd to death a prey:"
He ſpoke, and ſudden turn'd his ſteps away.
Meantime the revellers appear'd in view,
And joining Dorigene they all anew
Begin their rural gambols to purſue;
And there they ſported, till the full-orb'd ſun
Wearied and weak his deſtin'd courſe had run;
Then from the garden homeward bent their way,
Pleas'd with the varied paſtimes of the day.
Not ſo Aurelius, ſick with heartfelt grief,
Sad he retires, nor dares to hope relief:
A death-like chilneſs o'er his limbs he feels;
On the bare ground he ſad and ſuppliant kneels;
With ardent hands uplifted to the ſkies,
Raving he pours his grief with ceaſeleſs cries;
Then 'mong the gods the bright and glorious ſun
He firſt implores—and thus his prayer begun.
Father of light! he cries, whoſe potent ſway
Plants, herbs, and trees, and flowers alike obey;
Who live but as they drink thy quick'ning fire,
Bloom in thy ſmile, or hid from thee expire:

O mighty Phœbus! look with pity down
On one who ſinks oppreſs'd by beauty's frown.
Well thou my prayer may'ſt grant, if ſo thou wilt;
Of love I'm conſcious, but I know not guilt.
Deign then thine ear to lend, whilſt I impart
That which alone can heal my bleeding heart.
Thy lovely ſiſter, potent Lord! preſides
O'er the vaſt ocean's ever-changing tides;
Neptune's own trident to her empire yields,
And owns her miſtreſs of the briny fields:
And, as thou know'ſt, her firſt and great deſire
Is to be cheer'd with thy enlivening fire,
For which her conſtant ſtep thy path purſues;
So with like conſtancy old Ocean wooes
Fair Luna's grace, for her and her alone
Rivers and ſeas their guardian goddeſs own.
Grant then, O Phœbus! this my earneſt prayer,
And ſave a hapleſs wretch from deep deſpair!
And when you next aſcend the burning line,
Where ſultry Leo's blazing glories ſhine,
Pray her to bid the ſwelling floods ariſe,
And lift their foamy heads to laſh the ſkies;
That ſo each rock, that frowns on Britain's coaſt,
May ſink beneath the whelming torrent loſt.

Two

Two years let it remain, I humbly pray;
Then to my fair one boldly I may say,
Your promiſe keep, the rocks are ſunk away.

Grant me, O Phœbus! this my fond deſire,
And with thee pray thy ſiſter to conſpire!
Pray her, attentive keep thy ſteps in view,
And with like pace her ſteady courſe purſue!
Then, full for two whole years, both night and day,
A conſtant ſpring-flood ſhall her power obey.
But, oh! forget not, that theſe rocks be hurl'd
To Pluto's dark domain, the nether world;
Elſe, ſad preſage! all bootleſs is my pain,
And my fond hopes to win my fair are vain.

Then with bare foot to Delphos I'll repair,
And joyful pay my grateful homage there.
See down my cheek what copious ſorrows flow,
And mark with ceaſeleſs ſtreams my conſtant woe!
He ſpoke, and inſtant ſunk each ſenſe away,
And lifeleſs on the earth entranc'd he lay.

Now had the flower of chivalry once more
Return'd to much-lov'd Bretagne's long-loſt ſhore:
Enraptur'd Dorigene beholds again
The dear and honour'd cauſe of all her pain;

And

And now, ſecure from battle's dire alarms,
Claſps her lov'd hero in her faithful arms.
Full little did he ween, what lawleſs fires
Had rous'd a ſtranger's breaſt to wild deſires;
Faithful himſelf, his great and generous mind
Ne'er to ſuſpicion's whiſpers dark inclin'd:
Light was his heart, nor cares nor doubts it knew;
Bleſt in the love of her, he thought ſo true.
Aurelius now, with hopeleſs grief oppreſs'd,
Had two long years the bed of ſorrow preſs'd,
The while, nor joy nor comfort might he prove,
Save the ſweet ſolace of a brother's love.
He knew the fatal cauſe, and he alone,
That bade his heaving breaſt ne'er ceaſe to moan;
Yet was it whole without, no wound was ſeen,
Deep in his heart was fix'd the arrow keen;
And well ye know, how perilous the cure,
That heals the ſkin, ere yet the wound's ſecure.
Long had with tender ſympathetic pain
His ſorrowing brother heard him thus complain,
When it bethought him that a book erewhile,
With which he us'd at Orleans to beguile
(As buſy minds are wont) his vacant hours,
He once had ſeen, of ſtrange and ſecret powers;

Propitious

Propitious fortune to his wond'ring eyes
Had thrown, unaſk'd, the rare and envied prize:
Full on the deſk to view expos'd it lay,
Left by a youth, who oft had turn'd away
From graver law's decrees, and maxims ſage,
To feaſt on magic's faſcinating page.
This book ſpoke much of operations
Touching the eight and twenty manſions
Belonging to the moon, and tales like theſe,
Which now no credence gain, no longer pleaſe:
For pure religion now her light unfolds,
And the free mind no more in bondage holds.
Struck with this thought, his conſcious joy appears,
No longer now he doubts, no more he fears:
My brother's woes, he cries, now ſoon ſhall ceaſe,
And his rack'd heart again ſhall taſte of peace:
For potent art, I ween, ofttimes may cauſe
E'en nature to o'erſtep her ſteadieſt laws.
Full oft in trophied hall, or feſtive bower,
Have quaint magicians prov'd their wondrous power;
While through the arch the new-born river flow'd,
And gilded barges on the ſtream were row'd;
Now the grim lion o'er the foreſt ſcours,
Now the rich meadow blooms with mimic flowers,

Or

Or bluſhing vines their cluſter'd ſtores diſplay;
Then banner'd towers upriſe in fair array,
And inſtant vaniſh, at command, away.
Thus then I truſt, that haply might I find
At Orleans now ſome clerk, whoſe ſubtle mind
With magic's wondrous lore was rightly ſtor'd,
He to our woes might quick relief afford.
Charm'd by his ſpells then ſoon might diſappear
Thoſe rocks, that chill the ſtouteſt hearts with fear;
And ſhips might ſeem in tranquil ſtate to ride
On the ſafe boſom of the level tide.
Let but this ſemblance three ſhort days remain,
Then ſhall my brother's heart forget its pain.
Quick to his brother's mournful bed he flies,
And fills his gladden'd heart with ſweet ſurpriſe.
Up ſtarts the youth, his limbs no languor knew,
Reſolv'd hope's firſt dawn inſtant to purſue;
And Orleans' gates already ſeem in view.
Thither he eager haſtes, nor doubts to find
The certain balm to heal his tortur'd mind.
As near they came, they chanc'd a youth to meet,
Who ſeem'd with joy their wiſh'd approach to greet,
And to their wond'ring ears relates the cauſe,
Which their fond hopes to learned Orleans draws.

Now

Now many an eager queſtion they propoſe,
And beg the cunning wizard to diſcloſe
The various fates of thoſe they once had lov'd:
But the ſad tale their tendereſt ſorrows mov'd.
Homeward at length his way the ſorcerer bends,
And glad Aurelius on his ſteps attends;
There he beholds the high and ſumptuous board,
With laughing plenty's choiceſt viands ſtor'd:
Ne'er had he ſeen before ſuch pomp diſplay'd,
Nor manſion gay ſo gorgeouſly array'd.

Ere their repaſt they took, the wizard wight
Call'd forth ſtrange ſcenes to feaſt th' aſtoniſh'd ſight;
Foreſts he ſaw, and deer of monſtrous ſize,
Whoſe towering frontlets ſeem'd to touch the ſkies.
To the fleet hounds ſome fell a helpleſs prey,
Wounded with arrows keen ſome gaſping lay;
Then falconers (theſe retir'd) ſucceed in view,
And the lank heron o'er the lake purſue.
There on a plain he ſaw bold knights advance,
And brave the combat with the quivering lance;
And, ſtranger ſtill, himſelf in proper mien
Leading his favourite fair at length was ſeen,
In the light dance upon the feſtal green.

But

But when the wondrous man his hand uprear'd,
Then the bright viſions inſtant diſappear'd;
Yet while the gay ſucceſſive ſcenes he view'd,
In the ſame chamber ſtill unmov'd he ſtood;
Which with ſtrange inſtruments, and books profound,
Array'd in order quaint, was deck'd around.
His lacquey then the maſter call'd in haſte,
And bade him bring the long-delay'd repaſt.
"Sir," he replied, with lowly bending head,
"Your orders are obey'd, the table's ſpread."
"Then we'll retire," he ſaid, "without delay;
"'Tis time refreſhment ſweet ſhould now repay
"The cares and labours of the lengthen'd day."
Supper remov'd, the treaty next began;
What great reward ſhall tempt thee, mighty man!
The rocks of France to move, that none remain
From Loire's deep banks to thoſe of gentle Seine?
"A thouſand pounds is the rich boon I aſk,"
He then replied, "ere I perform the taſk."
"A thouſand pounds!" rejoic'd Aurelius cries:
"Were the whole world mine own," he quick replies,
"Grant but my wiſh, I'd give with joy the prize:
"Agreed—

"Agreed—and faithfully the price I'll pay,
"If my warm wiſhes meet no dull delay:
"But then firſt promiſe, ere to-morrow's ſun
"His courſe hath finiſh'd, that the deed be done."
Aurelius then content rètir'd to reſt,
And long-loſt ſleep again his eyelids preſs'd;
For labour paſt, and hope of joys in ſtore,
Had ſpread oblivion ſweet his ſorrows o'er.
Meantime Aurelius and his wizard friend
Their footſteps back to Bretagne's confines bend.
And now December's froſts, if right I ween,
Had from fair Nature torn her robe of green;
Now oft obſcur'd the pale and languid ſun
Mourn'd with ſhorn beams the courſe he late had run;
He whoſe bright locks, like ſtreams of burning gold,
No mortal eye unhurt might erſt behold,
Now, as the moon, all wan and weak appear,
And ſcarce the mid-day gloom can faintly cheer.
Now in due honour to the feſtal days
Aloft the cheerful hearth began to blaze;
O'er the rich board extends the ſmoaking chine,
And the full bugle foams with generous wine.
Obſequious firſt Aurelius tries to move
The wizard's mind, his potent art to prove;

"Nay,

" Nay, if thou heal not ſoon my ſorrow's ſmart,
" This ſword," he cries, " ſhall pierce thy faithleſs heart."
The cunning ſeer with pity view'd his grief,
And anxious ſtrove to bring him kind relief;
He watch'd with faithful zeal the lucky hour,
Which ſureſt bids to ſpeed his magic power;
Each eye with ſtrange illuſions to deceive,
And make e'en Dorigene herſelf believe,
That the huge rocks, that once deform'd the ſhore,
Now in th' abyſs engulph'd, ſhall riſe no more.
At length, propitious to the wizard's prayer,
The hour is come, and bids him quick prepare
His books, and tables fraught with magic lore,
That teach the heaven's kind aſpects to explore:
In them ſtrange charms and potent ſpells he finds,
And human eyes with vain illuſions blinds;
By theſe dark arts each rock's terrific head
Seems whelm'd and ſunk 'neath ocean's gulphy bed.
Aurelius now, long toſs'd betwixt th' extremes
Of dark deſpair and hope's enlivening gleams,
Had watch'd by day, by night, with anxious heart,
Th' expected proof of bleſt enchantment's art;

Now

Now, when he ſaw his eager wiſh complete,
O'erjoy'd falls inſtant at his maſter's feet;
To him and love's all-powerful queen he pays
The warmeſt tribute of his grateful praiſe.
Next, to the high-arch'd temple he repairs,
For there he knew her pure and conſtant prayers
The lovely Dorigene each morning pour'd,
And thank'd kind Heaven for her lov'd lord reſtor'd.
Her there he met; new fears his ſoul oppreſs'd,
And in low tone he thus the dame addreſs'd.
" Thou! who doſt rule with ſole ſupreme controul
" The hopes and fears of this devoted ſoul!
" Whom more than life I love, than death I fear,
" Lend to this laſt addreſs a patient ear!
" And though thou'rt dead to pity's tender pain,
" Thou wilt not, canſt not thy pure honour ſtain.
" Canſt thou forget, that 'neath yon garden's ſhade
" The ſacred vow with free accord was made?
" And though unworthy this poor heart may prove
" To win the matchleſs guerdon of thy love;
" Yet 'tis thine honour now, lov'd fair, I ſeek,
" 'Tis that alone, which gives me power to ſpeak.
" My part is done, thyſelf the truth behold,
" And oh! thy plighted faith for ever hold.

" Yet thine alone it is, or now to ſave
" A hapleſs wretch, or doom him to the grave:
" Thine own command obſequious I obey,
" And tell thee, each huge rock is ſunk away."
This ſaid, Aurelius left th' aſtoniſh'd dame,
And inſtant horror ſhook her tender frame;
From her pale cheek recoil'd the crimſon flood,
And, loſt in wild diſtraction, fix'd ſhe ſtood.
Ah! guileleſs wretch! too pure for cautious care,
How could I 'ſcape, ſhe cried, ſo blind a ſnare?
How could I dream, that nature would combine,
Again t' o'erwhelm a heart ſo worn as mine?
Homeward at length, with ſorrowing ſteps, ſhe goes,
But buries in her breaſt her weight of woes:
Far from his home Arviragus is gone;
And, but to him, ſhe told her griefs to none.
Yet would ſhe oft alone in tears complain,
And thus ſhe pour'd her ſolitary ſtrain.
Ah! hapleſs wretch! ſhe cried, whom unaware
Stern fate hath captur'd in her cruel ſnare!
From which no hopes of ſweet releaſe remain,
Save or from death, or foul diſhonour's ſtain.

Yet

Yet witneſs, righteous Heaven! that here I chooſe
Far readier life than innocence to loſe.
Death is the wretch's ſureſt, ſteadieſt friend,
And will in peace his keeneſt tortures end.
Full many a wife and many a hapleſs maid
Of old have call'd him dauntleſs to their aid;
And from deep woes their ſouls have quickly freed
(So ſtory tells) by one heroic deed.
When of old time, in Athens' fam'd domain,
The thirty tyrants held their bloody reign,
Too-wealthy Phido at a ſumptuous feaſt
They baſely ſlew, their unſuſpecting gueſt;
Then bade the minions of their curs'd commands
On his fair daughters lay their ruthleſs hands,
And bring them forth, ſad victims, to fulfil
The lawleſs craving of their brutal will.
The maids they mercileſs to dance conſtrain'd
On the wet floor their father's blood had ſtain'd.
Indignant they their ſavage foes defied,
And free from baſe diſhonour nobly died;
Down a deep well's dark cavern, undiſmay'd,
Leapt, prodigal of life, each glorious maid.
Thus, when, by conqueſt's ſavage joys elate,
Meſſene's ſons, t' inſult fall'n Sparta's fate,

Bade her fair daughters yield their blooming charms
To their ſtern conquerors' laſcivious arms,
Not one was found among the virgin train,
Whom her own poniard had not nobly ſlain.
Brave too like them, of honour'd memory, prov'd
The maid by Ariſtoclides belov'd:
On the ſame night the hated tyrant ſlew
Her aged ſire, to Dian's fane ſhe flew;
And, where the goddeſs' ſtatue high was plac'd,
Clung to the ſacred form, and cloſe embrac'd,
And, firm of purpoſe, the lov'd image held
Till her ſtern fate at length to yield compell'd.
If untroth'd virgins thus could boldly dare
The keeneſt pangs of torturing death to bear,
Much more ought I, a lov'd and honour'd wife,
To guard the faith I pledg'd, and yield my life.
'Twas thus that Aſdrubal's all-glorious dame
Still lives immortal in the rolls of fame;
When the ſack'd gates, ſo oft in vain aſſail'd,
Open'd at length, and Rome's proud arms prevail'd,
She ſaw around her ſpread the hoſtile fires,
But more ſhe fear'd the conqueror's warm deſires;

Rous'd

Rous'd to quick tranſport at the maddening thought,
Her lovely babes (a mournful group) ſhe ſought,
And to a favouring height the victims brought;
Then puſh'd them off, and, with new fury fir'd,
Ruſh'd on the flames herſelf, and there expir'd.
The Roman dame by Tarquin's force compreſs'd,
Plung'd the keen ſword in her diſhonour'd breaſt.
Thus did the fair Mileſian virgins fall,
Safe from the outrage of the conquering Gaul:
And tales a thouſand more could I relate,
Of thoſe, who, true to honour, ſmil'd at fate.
When Abradates' ſorrowing wife beheld
Her murder'd huſband ſtretch'd upon the field,
Reſolv'd to follow ſtill her much-lov'd lord,
In her ſoft breaſt ſhe ſheath'd her ſhining ſword,
And her warm life-blood in his wounds ſhe pour'd.
Since, then, ſo many thus have life diſdain'd,
Rather than live by baſe diſhonour ſtain'd,
Reſolv'd I'll die, nor ever falſe will prove
To a much-honour'd huſband's tender love.
Did not, Demotion! each griev'd heart bewail
Thy ſelf-ſlain daughter's ſad diſaſtrous tale?

And who, O Sedaſus! could e'er relate
With tearleſs eye thy children's mournful fate?
Shall not the Theban maids ſoft pity claim,
Who call'd ſtern death to hide their guiltleſs ſhame?
Why need I ſpeak of Nicerates' wife,
Who, for like cauſe, bereav'd herſelf of life?
Or, Alcibiades! the mortal pain
That ſhe, who lov'd thee, felt, when thou wert ſlain,
Leſt uninterr'd thy body might remain?
Who hath not heard Alceſtes' honour'd name?
Or, chaſte Penelope! thy wider fame?
Laodamia next in memory lives,
But not her loſt Proteſilaus ſurvives;
And ſhe, whoſe fame each tongue delights to tell,
Who life diſdain'd, when godlike Brutus fell;
And Artemiſia, Caria's well-known pride,
Who rais'd th' immortal pile, when her Mauſolus died.
Twice ſunk the ſun beneath the weſtern main,
Yet did the dame with ceaſeleſs ſighs complain.
On the third night Arviragus return'd,
And aſk'd with tender care why thus ſhe mourn'd.

His

His tender care did but her griefs renew,
And from her eyes increaſing torrents drew.
" Would," ſhe exclaim'd, " that I had ne'er been born!
" Oh! that I ne'er had fondly, madly ſworn!"
Then truly to him ſhe the tale declar'd,
As ye've already in due order heard.
" Is there none other cauſe, my life!" he cries,
" That bids inceſſant torrents ſwell thine eyes?"
" None," ſhe replied. " Then comfort take," he ſaid,
" Nor let ſad ſorrow longer bow thine head.
" Heaven oft to miſery guides a pitying friend,
" And may to thee unhop'd aſſiſtance lend.
" Yet this remember, ſpite of bittereſt pain,
" Thy ſacred promiſe unimpair'd maintain.
" Truth is the higheſt prize we e'er can keep,"
He nobly ſaid, then ſadly 'gan to weep;
And thus went on—" On pain of inſtant death,
" I charge thee, ne'er convey the ſlighteſt breath
" To ſoul that lives, but in your boſom hide
" The fatal ſorrows that our fears betide:
" See too, thy looks do not thy griefs betray,
" And mine I'll ſtrive t' endure, as beſt I may."
Then quick he call'd a ſquire and gentle maid;
" Follow my much-lov'd Dorigene," he ſaid,

" And to ſuch place your miſtreſs' ſteps attend."
They bow ſubmiſs, and forth their way they bend:
Yet why ſhe thither went, was ſtill conceal'd,
For to no ear had ſhe the cauſe reveal'd.

Scarce had they paſs'd along the neareſt ſtreet,
Ere that Aurelius on their way they meet;
For well was wont his keen and amorous eye
Her every action, every ſtep to ſpy:
And whether met by chance, or fix'd intent,
He aſk'd with joy, which way her footſteps bent.

She, as one mad with grief, or wild deſpair,
" To yon vile garden," anſwer'd, " I repair,
" True to the vow I made ſo raſhly there:
" Such are, alas! my huſband's fix'd commands."

Aurelius dumb with deep amazement ſtands,
And, as her words he weighs, his kindling ſoul,
Awaken'd now to virtue's ſweet controul,
The generous huſband's noble worth admires,
And loaths with cordial hate his own impure deſires.

And thus he ſpoke, " Belov'd and honour'd fair!
" Believe me, much thy virtuous griefs I ſhare;
" And ſo ſincerely my full ſoul reveres
" Thy huſband's noble conflict, that with tears,

" With

" With heartfelt tears I feel his generous ſtrife,
" Who yields in honour's cauſe ſo lov'd a wife.
" Tell him I freely all your vows reſign,
" And to his juſter claims ſurrender mine.
" Now then farewel! bleſt mirror of thy ſex!
" And may no future fears thy ſoul perplex!"
Thus by the ſquire, as by the knight, appear'd
Nice honour's laws to be alike rever'd:
Pierc'd with his goodneſs, proſtrate on her knees,
Her grateful hands her kind deliverer ſeize;
Tears ſpoke alone, for words refus'd to tell
The new-born joys, that now her boſom ſwell.
Long liv'd in union ſweet this happy pair,
Nor dark diſtruſt they knew, nor carking care;
Bleſt in each other, thus their days they paſs'd,
And love's pure torch burn'd cloudleſs to the laſt.
Now big with ruin to Aurelius' fears
Th' expecting wizard's coſtly claim appears:
" Ah! curs'd," he ſaid, " be that unhappy hour,
" When baſe I yielded to love's treach'rous power!
" My goodly heritage I now muſt ſell,
" And far from friends in lonely exile dwell;
" Unleſs (what leaſt I hope) diſtreſs like mine
" May to ſweet ſympathy his breaſt incline.

" This

" This boon aſſur'd, I may at leaſt eſſay
" Each year fix'd portions of the debt to pay;
" For though my heart ſinks deep with heavieſt care,
" Yet ſhall baſe falſehood ne'er find entrance there."
His coffer then with trembling hands he drains,
And takes his leſſen'd treaſures' ſad remains.
Five times an hundred pounds is all his ſtore,
Nor can repeated reckonings make it more.
This to the cunning ſeer he faithful bears,
And time the reſt to pay implores with tears.
" Since, ſir," he ſaid, " nought yet could e'er prevail
" On my firm mind in honour'd faith to fail,
" And rather now in tatter'd weeds, I ſwear,
" I'd beg from door to door my ſcanty fare,
" Than not to thee repay with thankful hand
" The full requital of thy juſt demand;
" Yet ere the reſt I pay, I aſk this grace,
" Safe ſureties take, but grant me longer ſpace.
" Ruin attends, if thou my prayer refuſe,
" And I my ſubſtance muſt for ever loſe."
" Have not," the man replied, " my faithful hands
" Perform'd to full extent thy hard commands?

" And

" And do not now thy lady's blooming charms
" Bleſs with unfated joys thy happy arms?"
" Well thou the work haſt done, I free confeſs;
" Yet do not I the lovely fair poſſeſs."
Then he in order juſt the tale began,
Each fact relating to th' aſtoniſh'd man.
" Arviragus," he ſays, " did nobly chooſe
" Rather his love, than dearer faith to loſe.
" Who, lovely Dorigene! may count thy tears,
" Thy heart-felt ſorrows, and thy tender fears,
" And, 'mid them all, thy fix'd contempt of life,
" Rather than prove a baſe and faithleſs wife?
" Guiltleſs the vow ſhe made, nor could believe
" Such ſtrange illuſions might her eyes deceive.
" This ſuch ſoft pity in my boſom wrought,
" That purg'd each ſenſual wiſh, each baſer thought.
" Pure as ſhe came, I bade her home return,
" And made her faithful heart no longer mourn."
" Well have both knight and ſquire," the wizard ſaid,
" The ſacred laws of courteſy obey'd.
" But bounteous Heaven hath not to you confin'd
" The bleſt exertions of a generous mind:

" Here

" Here then I freely all your debt releaſe,
" And may your ſoul henceforth be ſooth'd in peace."
Here ends my tale, and now 'tis yours to ſay,
Which did the nobleſt proof of worth diſplay.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO THE

DOCTOR'S TALE.

A Future day, our jolly Hoſt replied,
May well ſuffice that queſtion to decide.
Of thee, good Doctor, the next tale I aſk;
And well, I know, thou wilt perform the taſk.—
If worth your hearing I can aught ſupply,
Freely, ſir Hoſt, he anſwer'd, I'll comply.

THE

THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

THERE liv'd, ſo Livy writes, well known to fame,
A wealthy knight, Virginius was his name:
One only daughter bleſs'd his tender care,
In mind as lovely as in perſon fair;
For plaſtic Nature, earneſt to impart
A finiſh'd pattern of her mighty art,
Had the whole powers of her nice ſkill diſplay'd,
When firſt ſhe form'd the fair unrivall'd maid:
And when with joy ſhe view'd the work divine,
"Go," ſhe exclaim'd, "great Nature's beſt de-
ſign,
"And bid each meaner beauty yield to thine.
"In vain Pygmalion ſhall his anvil beat,
"In vain renew his forge's failing heat;
"In vain ſhall Phidias teach th' obedient ſtone
"To catch the grace, that ſhines in thee alone;
"And Zeuxis' ſofter touch in vain aſpire
"To warm the canvaſs with ſuch living fire.
"For the great Power ſupreme to me hath given
"To form and paint each creature under heaven;

"And

" And with obſervance juſt my ready hand
" Obeys th' Almighty Maſter's dread command."
Thus ſpake the potent Queen with conſcious pride,
And to the trial Earth and Heaven defied;
For as her varied ſkill the artiſt ſhews,
When with appropriate bluſh ſhe decks the roſe,
Or bids the lily charm th' admiring ſight,
Clad in her robes of chaſte unſullied white;
So the ſame tints in the lov'd maid combine,
And in juſt ſhade and due proportion ſhine.
Now ſince her birth had fourteen ſummers flown,
And Love's fair Goddeſs hail'd her as her own;
The God of Day her flowing locks had dyed
Like the bright ſtreamlets of the ſolar tide:
Yet not to perſon were her charms confin'd,
Hers was each beauty of the cultur'd mind.
In the mild graces of her modeſt mien
The flower of virgin gentleneſs was ſeen;
Meek was her ſoul, and thankful to receive
Each ſoft correction Friendſhip's voice could give;
And when requir'd, as in an evening ſky
Is Zephyr's ſcarce-heard ſound, was her reply.
Though on her mind had wiſdom's precious lore
Pour'd the rich treaſures of her copious ſtore,

Still

Still was her ſpeech in modeſt plainneſs dreſt,
And well her ſoul's ſimplicity confeſs'd.
Not in hard words, like theirs who wiſh to ſhew
The very little that by chance they know;
But pure and proper as her rank became,
Clear as her thoughts, and mark'd with maiden ſhame.
From Sloth's inſidious bands her powers to ſave,
To varied Induſtry her time ſhe gave;
And with like dread away in haſte ſhe flew,
Whene'er the fiend Exceſs appear'd in view:
Oft ſhe for this ſome ſudden ill would feign,
Beg to retire, and undiſturb'd complain,
Whene'er ſhe revel gay or feaſt foreſaw,
Where ill-taught Mirth might break Diſcretion's law.
And ſure the paſſions of a blooming maid
Will duly ripen in their deſtin'd ſhade,
Nor need expoſure to the ſun for aid:
Yet this we do, when Pleaſure's gay repaſt
Before the eyes of youth too ſoon we caſt.
Well then, ye elder dames, who guard the fair,
Watch your great charge with due and conſtant care;
Far from the haunts of Vice their footſteps lead,
And teach them early Virtue's paths to tread.

Hence

Hence were ye choſen, or that chaſte and pure
Pleaſure's gay baits could ne'er your eyes allure,
Or that, by ſad experience wiſer grown,
Ye well can watch the frailties, once your own:
Thus him the ſureſt park-keeper we find,
Who once to deer-ſtealing was moſt inclin'd.
Then of the falſe betrayer well beware,
Nor let baſe gold e'er ſlack your watchful care:
But chief Heav'n ſhield ye from the baſe intent,
Yourſelves to foul ſeduction to conſent;
For of the vile, the vileſt ſure are they,
Who can entruſted innocence betray.

Ye parents too! by nature's laws aſſign'd
The faithful guardians of the tender mind!
Watch well your ſacred truſt; and oh! beware
That yourſelves ſpread not the deſtructive ſnare!
For this ye do, when, by weak fondneſs ſway'd,
Ye ſhrink to uſe correction's wholeſome aid;
Or when, more foul! yourſelves your ſons betray,
And by example vile to vice direct the way.
But to my tale—This bright and peerleſs maid
Liv'd unreſtrain'd, nor needed guidance' aid;
For in her perfect pattern all might ſee
The very image they themſelves ſhould be.

For all her virtues prais'd, except alone
The green-ey'd monſter, to detraction prone,
Who envious hates all merit but her own.
One day this maiden to the church repairs,
To pour to Heaven her pure and humble prayers;
And thus it chanc'd, that, as along ſhe paſs'd,
On her his lawleſs eyes a judge had caſt.
Struck with her charms, his wily mind revolves
How beſt to win her, and at length reſolves
By ſubtle craft the lovely prize to gain,
Since every hope beſides he ſees is vain.
Guarded by numerous friends his fears deſcry,
That her lov'd virtues open force defy;
And well he augurs that a ſoul ſo pure
No baſe temptation could from virtue lure.
Fix'd in his foul intent, of kindred kind
A wretch he ſeeks, of baſe and ſordid mind,
Prone to vile deeds, and but in miſchief bold,
To him his ſecret, ſhameleſs wiſh he told.
Inſtant the pander to his will aſſents,
And his quick wit as ſoon a plot invents:
Amply the judge his docile minion paid,
And ſmil'd ſecure in his expected aid.

But

But ſay, O Muſe! ere further you proceed,
Who were the plotters of ſo dire a deed!
Let them to infamy be both proclaim'd,
The one was Appius, t'other Claudius nam'd.
Now had again the court in order met,
And on his chair aloft the judge was ſet:
Forth Claudius comes, and, earneſt to be heard,
Againſt Virginius his complaint preferr'd:
With ſeeming equity the judge replied,
Ne'er on an abſent culprit I decide;
Firſt let Virginius in the court appear,
And then with juſtice ſtrict the caſe I'll hear.
Virginius ſtraight obey'd the judge's will,
When in the court aloud was read the bill—
I much-wrong'd Claudius humbly here complain,
That this Virginius will per force detain
My rightful ſlave, and, juſtice to evade,
For his own daughter owns the menial maid.
Her from my houſe decoy'd at dead of night,
Home to his own convey'd this graceleſs wight:
Sponſors before you I will inſtant call,
Who, that I ſpeak the truth, will witneſs all:
Then, judge moſt upright! to my ſuit attend,
Nor let the poor, when injur'd, want a friend!

Palſied with wild ſurpriſe the father ſtood,
And with ſtern eye th' audacious villain view'd.
But to his falſehoods ere he might reply,
Or witneſs bring, the charges to deny,
The judge with ſtudied haſte this judgment gave,
" Back to her maſter be return'd the ſlave!
" Here bring her forth, of this high court the ward,
" Who of th' oppreſs'd the ſacred right ſhall guard."
Now the true cauſe th' afflicted father ſaw,
That warp'd the juſtice of impartial law:
Home he repairs with ſad and ſtern intent,
And inſtant for his lovely daughter ſent.
Soon as ſhe came, with looks of fix'd deſpair
Her face he view'd, now firſt eſteem'd too fair;
And on her fatal charms in anguiſh hung,
Whilſt with a parent's pangs his heart was wrung.
" Daughter," he ſaid, " ſweet cauſe of bittereſt woe!
" How may I teach thee thy ſad doom to know!
" Weigh well the choice! Here foul diſhonour waits,
" There death 'gainſt every ill bars faſt the gates.
" Yet bleeds my ſoul to think a heart ſo pure
" Muſt thus untimely death's dire ſtroke endure.

" O!

" O! deareſt child! whom, ſince thy mother bore
" Thy lovely form, I ne'er was wont before,
" But with remembrance ſweet, and joy ſupreme,
" By day to doat on, and by night to dream!
" With patience, child moſt lov'd! thy fate endure,
" For death, and only death, our woes may cure.
" Curſt be the day when Appius' luſtful eyes
" Firſt view'd thy charms, and mark'd them for his prize."
Then to her wond'ring ears did he unfold
The vile atrocious tale, I juſt have told."
" Father," ſhe cried, with faint and falt'ring tongue,
While on his neck in fond embrace ſhe hung,
" Is it beyond all hope by fate decreed,
" That this poor heart, though innocent, muſt bleed?
" Is there no grace?" ſhe ſaid, o'erpow'r'd with grief,
" Can heav'n-born pity ſend no kind relief?"
" None," ſaid the wretched ſire, " no hope remains,
" If thou would'ſt fly diſhonour's hateful ſtains."
" Then this," ſhe ſaid, " ere to the darkſome grave
" I drop for ever, this one boon I crave:
" Grant me a little ſpace to weep and pray,
" And I will patient then your will obey!

" Jephthah refus'd not this ſmall boon to give
" To the lov'd child his oath forbade to live.
" This was her crime, fond maid! ſhe flew to meet
" Her much-lov'd ſire, and kiſs his honour'd feet:
" For which"—this ſaid, her ſenſes 'gan decay,
And in her father's arms ſhe ſwoon'd away.
Wak'd from her trance, ſhe ſpake with firmer tone,
" Much honour'd ſire! thy dread commands be done!
" Content my life I yield my ſhame to ſave,
" And ſink a ſpotleſs virgin to the grave."
Then ſhe his promiſe begg'd, and pray'd full oft
That when he ſtruck, his ſword would ſmite her ſoft;
And with that word o'erpow'r'd, ſhe ſwoon'd again,
And ended then her ſorrows and her pain:
For her firm ſire the favouring moment took,
And, though with agony his frame was ſhook,
Yet right he aim'd, though pierc'd with tend'reſt woe,
And her head inſtant ſever'd at a blow.
Then to the court a truſty page he ſent,
And bade him to the judge the head preſent.
This when he ſees, his blood with vengeance boils,
And on Virginius all his rage recoils.
Him he condemns to death; but righteous Heaven
To ſuffering worth hath ever ſhelter given.

Thus

Thus did it now; for ere his curs'd commands
Obey'd might be, out of his murderous hands,
The people, madly rous'd with fierce uproar,
The hapleſs victim of his vengeance tore,
And with juſt rage himſelf to priſon bore.
There his dire crimes roſe to his frighted view,
And ſelf-condemn'd at length himſelf he ſlew.
His baſe-born minion on the fatal tree,
His life to forfeit, the juſt laws decree.
Him with ſoft pity kind Virginius view'd,
And, 'ſtead of death, for milder exile ſued.
Who knows how long Heav'n's patience may endure?
Late though its vengeance, yet its ſtroke is ſure.
Conſcience beſides with ſcourge of ſteel will ſmite,
And bring the deeds of darkneſs all to light.
Hence then beware! your ſins in time forſake,
For judgment, late or ſoon, each ſinner will o'ertake.

PROLOGUE

TO

THE PARDONER'S TALE.

THEN ſaid our Hoſt enrag'd (and roundly ſwore)
Both judge and witneſs I alike abhor.
What death ſo painful do not thoſe deſerve,
Who thus from ſacred right ſo vilely ſwerve?
Dearly, alas! has this poor ſuffering maid
For the vain charms of envied beauty paid;
And oft indeed with ſad ſurpriſe we find
Fortune moſt fatal when ſhe moſt is kind;
Nor rarer our deſtruction do we owe
To the beſt gifts kind Nature can beſtow.
Maſter of mine, and learned Doctor dear,
This was, alas! a piteous tale to hear.
May Heaven preſerve thee ſafe from all attacks,
And may thy pots and jordans know no cracks.
Thy ſovereign conſerves may no ills befall,
But may they, ſure of conqueſt, proſper all!
In troth, good Doctor, thou'rt a proper man,
And like a prelate, by St. Ronian:

But

But thy ſad ſtory's ſoft pathetic ſtrain
Has caus'd about my heart a fearful pain.
Some ſovereign balſam, quick, oh! quick apply,
At leaſt ſome nappy ale, or elſe I die.
And if I hear not ſoon ſome livelier tale,
I fear your choiceſt drugs will nought avail.
But let's no longer on ſuch ſorrows dwell;
Pard'ner, begin ſome merry jeſt to tell.
Ay, by St. Ronian, will I, if I can;
But I muſt here embrace the flowing can:
Nor will you get from me or jeſt or gibe,
Till inſpiration deep I firſt imbibe.
Then ſaid they all, Beware, our reverend friend,
That no looſe ribaldry our ears offend;
But let ſome moral grave thy words commend.
I grant, he ſaid, your wiſh; and while I drink,
Upon ſome decent tale I'll ſtrive to think.

THE PARDONER'S TALE.

LORDLINGS, he ſaith, whene'er in church I preach,
To the top note I raiſe my ſounding ſpeech,
And like a bell ring out a ſwinging peal,
And forth by rote the ready texts I deal.
My theme is always one, and ever was,
* *Radix malorum eſt cupiditas.*
The place from whence I came I firſt declare;
Next I produce to view my bulls ſo fair,
To which our holy Father's ſeal appends,
(Protection ſure to all his favour'd friends.)
Thus me nor prieſts nor lay may dare embroil,
But aid the progreſs of my holy toil.
Then I amuſe their ears with idle tales,
Decrees of popes and learned cardinals,
Of holy patriarchs and of biſhops ſhew,
And ſentences of Latin ſpout a few.
This o'er my words ſpreads an impoſing glare,
And at my depth of learning makes them ſtare:

* Covetouſneſs is the root of evil.

By

By arts like theſe their willing eyes I blind,
And in deep reverence hold the paſſive mind.
Then I diſplay to them long cryſtal ſtones,
Cramm'd full of colour'd ſhreds, and bits of bones;
And theſe they all, and many a bauble more,
For ſacred relics of the ſaints adore.
A bone beſides of wondrous pow'r I keep,
Cut from the ſhoulder of a Jewiſh ſheep.
Then to them thus I ſay—If you but ſteep,
My worthy friends, this bone in pond or well,
And if or cow, or calf, or ox ſhould ſwell,
By poiſon ſwallow'd, or by reptile ſtung,
Take water of that well and waſh his tongue:
Or if your ſheep ſhould pine with ſcabby ſore,
Take but a ſingle draught, they'll pine no more.
And if the man that owns th' infected beaſt
Will, ere the morning glads the bluſhing eaſt,
Faſting each week drink of that well a draught,
As that ſame holy Jew our elders taught,
His fruitful cattle and his gather'd ſtore
Shall, as he views them, ſtill increaſe the more:
And if with jealous rage his boſom ſwell,
Let him but make his pottage from that well,

Then

Then ſhall he ne'er again his wife ſuſpect,
E'en though himſelf did erſt her crime detect;
And though, o'ercome by ſacerdotal charms,
Prieſts more than two had preſs'd her in their arms.
Here's too a mitten! once put in your hand,
And plenty ſoon ſhall bleſs your fruitful land,
And whatſoe'er or wheat or oats you ſow,
Unuſual harveſts ſhall your barns o'erflow;
With this proviſo, that you ne'er omit
To bring the offering which you know is fit.
But I muſt this, my friends, to all premiſe,
None view my relics with unhallow'd eyes.
If in this church then hapleſs wight ſhould be,
Whoſe ſoul's deep ſtain'd with foul impiety,
And if ſo dire his ſins appear'd to view,
That he for pardon ne'er has dar'd to ſue;
If wife there be, who, faithleſs to her vows,
Hath planted antlers on her huſband's brows;
Let not ſuch miſcreants vile preſume t' approach,
Nor hope theſe holy relics e'er to touch:
But thoſe whoſe conſcious ſouls ſuch ſins oppreſs,
Let them to me their heinous guilt confeſs;
And by the power this ſacred bull concedes,
I'll ſtraight abſolve them from their fouleſt deeds.

Thus

Thus ſince I firſt began the pardoning trade,
Yearly an hundred goodly marks I've made.
When in my pulpit rais'd, with look profound,
I view the gaping crowd collected round,
Aloud I rant, as ye have heard before,
And tell a thouſand idle ſtories more;
Then forth with painful toil my neck I ſtretch,
And eaſt and weſt my arms extended reach.
So on a barn's long roof you might have ſeen
A pouting pigeon woo his feather'd queen.
How curs'd a ſin is avarice I teach;
This is the conſtant theme on which I preach:
For all my aim is this, to make men free
To give their pence, and only unto me.
'Tis not to check foul vice my words are meant,
But gain, ungodly gain 's my ſole intent.
And when I once have earth'd them in the grave,
Little I care whether their ſouls they ſave.
Some pleaſe the ear with flattery's ſoothing oil,
And hope advancement from ſo mean a toil;
Some aim at fame, though plac'd beyond their reach;
And ſome from pure ill-nature love to preach.
Lives there a man ſo daring to offend,
Whether or me, or any reverend friend?

At

At him I inſtant aim a covert blow,
And in my ſermon gall the rebel foe;
Cautious his name expreſs I ſpeak not out,
Yet none the ſtrong reſemblance e'er can doubt:
Beneath this cloak my vengeful ſtrokes I deal,
Which thoſe, who once offend, are ſure to feel.
But you have heard me this before explain,
Preach as I will, I only preach for gain;
Therefore my theme is yet, and ever was,
Radix malorum eſt cupiditas.

Oft may you hear me 'gainſt ſome vice declaim,
Though I myſelf the while purſue the ſame:
Many from avarice thus my preaching turns,
Though with its baſeſt fires my boſom burns.

Then I enſamples bring them, goodly ſtore,
Of thoſe who liv'd renown'd in days of yore;
For ſimple folk delight in ſtories old,
Which once impreſs'd, their minds for ever hold.
Think ye, my friends, I'm ſo bereft of ſenſe,
That if by preaching I can gain the pence,
So good a calling I will e'er refuſe,
And meagre want will rather wilful chooſe?
Think ye for baſkets I will oſiers twine,
While others drain their cheſts to heap up mine?

Th'

Th' apoſtles ne'er I'll ſtrive to counterfeit;
Money I'll have, and wool, and cheeſe, and wheat:
Nor whether got from rich or poor I heed;
Widows and orphans all ſupply my need.
Nor theſe alone, each luxury be mine,
Girls that are kind, and bowls of ſparkling wine.
But liſt, good ſirs! you aſk of me a tale;
And now I've drank a draught of nappy ale,
Though I'm no ſaint, ne'er doubt but you ſhall hear
A tale that won't offend the chaſteſt ear:
For grave diſcourſes oft I'm wont to hold;
Then keep your peace, and I'll my tale unfold.
In Flanders once there liv'd a jolly crew,
Whom youth and kindred ſports together drew;
Taverns they haunted, riot was their joy,
And cards, and dice, and drink their ſole employ;
Each night to Belial did they homage pay,
Nor ceas'd the banquet with the riſing day.
Their impious oaths would ſhock the coarſeſt ear;
Their Saviour's name impreſs'd nor awe nor fear:
Wicked and wanton as the Jews of yore,
Again his ſide they pierc'd, again his limbs they tore.
A train of tumblers, ſkill'd in wanton feats,
And female all, the feſtive ſport completes;

Singers

Singers with harps, and bawds, and waferers,
Which are the very Devil's officers;
Form'd are they all to fan unholy fires,
And rouſe the paſſions to impure deſires:
For well admoniſheth the text divine,
The ſureſt path to ſin 's exceſs in wine:
Drunken with wine inceſtuous Lot was led
(Dreadful to name) to ſtain his daughter's bed.
'Twas not, till heated with the maddening bowl,
That the fair dancer won on Herod's ſoul,
Her wiſh to grant; and then with ſhame he bade
His ſlaves to bring the Baptiſt's guiltleſs head.
Madneſs and drunkenneſs are near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
So ſaith the noble Roman's moral page,
For both alike diſplay phrenetic rage:
This has its bounds, the raving of an hour;
That the ſame phrenſy's more continued power.
O curſed Gluttony! man's direſt foe!
Source thou of all the ills we feel below!
By thee to death eternal man were driven,
Had Chriſt not bled, and op'd the gates of Heaven.
See, then, the foulneſs of this hateful vice,
Which to atone, requir'd ſo vaſt a price.

This

This was the ſin that our firſt parents drove
From bliſsful Eden's ever-ſmiling grove.
Long as they liv'd by gluttonous joys unſtain'd,
The happy pair in Paradiſe remain'd:
But inſtant as they broke the dread command,
The ſword wide-flaming arm'd the angel's hand,
And drove the guilty exiles from the land.
Behold the demons! dire Diſeaſe and Pain!
Theſe form unſated Gluttony's mournful train;
Theſe on the table's lengthen'd joys attend,
Joys that in long regret are ſure to end.
Does not nice fancy with faſtidious taſte
Send forth o'er ſouth and north, and weſt and eaſt,
To cull new dainties for the labour'd feaſt?
Fire, earth, and air, and water muſt combine,
Before the pamper'd glutton deigns to dine.
Well, ſo ſaith Paul, hath Heaven's high will ordain'd,
That with fit meats our bodies be ſuſtain'd;
But to decay they both alike ſhall yield,
As the frail graſs upon the flowery field.
Vile is the vice to ply th' inceſſant bowl,
Till the ſtrong fumes o'erwhelm the ſtruggling ſoul;

Or Nature, ſated with her thirſty toils,
Sick and o'ercharg'd at the full draught recoils.
Oft, ſaith th' Apoſtle, I've with heartfelt pain
Before declar'd, and now declare again,
That, Chriſtians though in name, not few are thoſe,
Who to the holy croſs are fierceſt foes;
Theſe ſhall o'ertake deſtruction's iron rod,
Whoſe pride's their ſhame, whoſe belly is their God.
O thou foul member of our mortal frame!
Who may thy vile corruptions dare to name?
Behold! the cooks on the great work intent,
Converting ſubſtance into accident!
By day, by night, they labour to fulfil
The captious cravings of thy liquoriſh will.
Now grating ſaws the ſtubborn bones divide,
That the ſoft marrow down the throat may glide:
Fiſh, fleſh, and fowl with cunning art they take,
And from the mixture various ſauces make;
Spices and roots improve the groſs delight,
And ſtill create a newer appetite:
But dead to virtue is that abject mind,
Which to ſuch pleaſures deigns to be reſign'd.
Wine is the bane of worth, and drunkenneſs
Is full of ſtriving and of wretchedneſs.

O drunken

O drunken man! disfigur'd is thy face,
Sour is thy breath, foul art thou to embrace:
Like a ſtuck ſwine thou to the earth doſt fall,
Thy ſpeech, thy wit, thy ſenſes vaniſh'd all;
Or, if thou ſpeak'ſt, 'tis only to reveal
That which thy ſober ſenſe would moſt conceal.
Heav'n keep you, friends, with its peculiar care,
And of the baneful practice each beware:
But chiefly of the treacherous wine of Lepe *,
Renown'd in Fiſh-ſtreet, and in neighbouring Chepe:
For, fraught with ſubtle power, the wines of Spain
Inſidious creep t' aſſail the maddening brain:

* According to the geographers, Lepe was not far from Cadiz. This wine, of whatever ſort it may have been, was probably much ſtronger than the Gaſcon wines uſually drunk in England. Spaniſh wines might alſo be more alluring upon account of their greater rarity. Among the orders of the royal houſehold in 1604, is the following; [Mſ. Harl. 293. fol. 162.] "And whereas "in tymes paſt, Spaniſh wines, called ſacke, were little or noe "whit uſed in our courte, and that in later years, though not "of ordinary allowance, it was thought convenient that noble- "men, &c. might have a boule or glaſs, &c. we underſtanding "that it is now uſed as common drink, &c. reduce the allow- "ance to 12 gallons a day for the court, &c."——TYRWHITT, ver. 12497.

Three draughts at moſt the thoughtleſs victim takes,
Then vanquiſh'd reaſon quick her poſt forſakes,
And as the potent fumes ſucceſſive riſe,
Illuſive viſions dance before his eyes;
Spain's towering hills his heated fancy views,
And his frail ſtep the phantom vain purſues.
Think on the feats of high renown, that ſhine
In the fair record of the book divine:
'Twas not the fever of the pamper'd feaſt,
But vigorous abſtinence the ſinews brac'd;
This the purg'd ſoul with unknown ardour fir'd,
And actions more than human oft inſpir'd.
Impetuous Attila, the ſcourge of Rome,
Fell by intemperate joys at length o'ercome.
Thus the wiſe mother to her royal ſon:
" The joys of treach'rous wine with horror ſhun;
" For white-rob'd Juſtice, heav'nly maid, alone
" Can add true ſplendour to the glitt'ring throne.
" But, oh! my Lemuel, where's the heart ſo pure,
" Whoſe juſtice wine's ſtrong fumes may ne'er obſcure?"
Yet is not wine the only foe we find,
That aims deſtruction at th' ingenuous mind;
Gaming, infectious peſt, corrupts the age,
And day by day ſpreads wide her baneful rage.

Parent

Parent of dire diſtreſs, deſtructive fiend!
What hideous furies on thy ſteps attend!
Unpitied Penury, and fraudful Guile,
Hell-born Deceit, with ever practis'd ſmile!
And ideot Blaſphemy his front uprears,
High Heaven he mocks, and laughs at ſlaviſh fears;
And fell Self-Murder ſlowly ſtalks behind,
The laſt ſad refuge of the hopeleſs mind.
Far from her noiſy haunts flies honeſt Fame,
And marks with laſting blot each recreant name
Of him, whoſe ſordid and ignoble ſoul
Yields to ſo baſe a tyrant's ſtern controul:
But thoſe diſhonour's fouleſt ſtains await,
Who high in dignity are plac'd by fate,
But fair diſtinction's envied poſt decline,
And each bright hope for gaming's joys reſign.
And if the breaſts of kings her empire own,
Loſt is at once the ſplendour of the throne.
Erewhile to Corinth hardy Sparta ſent
Chilon, a ſage renown'd, with fix'd intent,
That the two ſtates in friendly union tied
No craft might weaken, and no force divide.
But when the chiefs among the Spartan came,
And found that hazard's keen eventful game

Alone their minds employ'd; "My noble race
"Ne'er ſhall," he ſaid, "ſo vile a work debaſe,
"As with ſuch friends my country to ally;
"Rather than this, ye fates, with joy I'll die."
Thus Parthia's monarch, hoping to reclaim
From gaming's rage Demetrius' ſullied name,
To him an embaſſy indignant ſent,
Two dice in ſcornful mockery to preſent.
And ſure great lords may find ſome worthier play,
To drive the ſlow and joyleſs hours away.
'Tis from this fertile ſeed-bed oaths ariſe,
And their long train of foul impieties;
For thus th' Evangeliſt aloud declares,
He God's high laws offends, who idly ſwears.
To this the prophet's holy words accord,
Swear if thou doſt, maintain thy ſacred word:
In the firſt table of the dread commands,
Second in order this great mandate ſtands,
"* Take not my name in vain;" this law precedes
That which forbids man's moſt flagitious deeds,

* I cannot here omit remarking the keenneſs of Chaucer's ſatire, who, in drawing the picture of an ignorant and unprincipled Prieſt, makes him miſquote the Commandments—the third for the ſecond.

And

And him ſhall vengeance' keeneſt ſtroke o'ertake,
Whoſe tongue rebellious dares its force to break.
But to my promis'd tale—The early ſound
Of matins had not yet been heard around,
When at the tavern the boon friends had met,
(The bowl before them in due order ſet)
Meantime a paſſing funeral's well-known knell
Toll'd a departed brother's laſt farewell.
On this the boy they call, intent to know
The hapleſs object of ſuch early woe:
" Well did ye know him, ſirs," the boy replied,
" And but this night your old aſſociate died:
" Near him the caitif Death unheeded drew,
" And drunk and helpleſs like a coward flew.
" Thouſands and thouſands hath the peſt before
" Sent unrelenting to the Stygian ſhore.
" You, then, my maſters, of his ſtroke beware,
" And for ſo dire a foe in time prepare."
Then one with aſpect grave replied, " The youth
" Hath well, my friends, deſcrib'd the mournful truth.
" Near to this ſpot a village drear I know,
" (The ſaddeſt picture of unbounded woe)

" There hath the tyrant ſlain of every age,
" Woman, and man, and child, and hind, and page;
" And well our care he claims, for much I fear,
" Since he hath fix'd his dark abode ſo near."
" Shame on your fears," a bravo bold replies;
" I ſcorn the caitif, and his pow'r deſpiſe;
" And I will reſtleſs hunt each lane and ſtreet,
" So that the dreaded foe at length I meet.
" Come now, my boys, we three our oaths will plight,
" Our force againſt the tyrant to unite,
" And he ſhall ne'er ſurvive th' approaching night.
" Agreed," with hearty voice, they each reply'd,
" Nought ſhall henceforth our cordial ſouls divide."
Then up in drunken rage they furious ſtart,
And for the village all in haſte depart;
And loud they ſwear, elate with frantic joy,
Death, ſhould they meet him, they will quick deſtroy.
When they had gone not fully half a mile,
Right in the pathway, as they reach'd a ſtile,
An aged man they met, in mean array—
" Save you, good lords," he ſaid, and meekly gave the way.

Him

Him then the boldeſt of the three addreſs'd,
" Wretch that thou art, by double griefs oppreſs'd,
" By age bent down, not leſs than carking care,
" Wherefore ſo long doſt thou ſuch miſery bear?"
Then rais'd the aged man his feeble eye,
And in his viſage look'd, and made reply:
" It is, good ſir, for this, I may not find,
" Were I to roam to Afric or to Ind,
" Or earth's remoteſt confines ſhould I range,
" One that for theſe white locks his youth would change.
" Keep then I muſt time's heavy burden ſtill,
" And patient wait for Heav'n's all-righteous will:
" E'en greedy Death, how much ſoe'er I grieve,
" Will not, though proffer'd, yet my life receive.
" Here at my mother Earth's deaf, ſullen gate,
" My ſtaff, ſad ſole ſupport, early and late,
" Knocks with inceſſant ſtroke, but knocks in vain,
" For nought ſhe hears, though ſadly I complain.
" But, ſirs, ſmall proof of courteſy appears,
" When vaunting youth inſults declining years;
" Caſt but your eyes on ſcripture's hallow'd page,
" There ſhall ye learn to reverence hoary age.

" If

" If then full days ye wiſh yourſelves to ſee,
" Ah! do not throw reviling taunts on me.
" But may kind Heaven protect you all, I pray:
" I needs muſt onward hold my ſlow and painful
way."

" That ſhall you not, old churl," with ſaucy tone,
The hazardor replies, " by holy John:
" The hated traitor Death I heard thee name;
" Long has the fiend to me been known by fame.
" To him our friends have daily fall'n a prey,
" And wide the country round his victims lay:
" Quick to his lurking hole my footſteps lead,
" Or inſtant vengeance waits thy palſied head."

" Sirs!" then the man replied, " if you to find
" All-powerful Death ſo ſtrongly are inclin'd,
" Let but that crooked path direct your feet,
" And then the wiſh'd-for foe ye ſure ſhall meet:
" For in that grove that rears its head ſo high,
" I late beheld him as I paſſed by.
" See you yon oak that towers above the wood?
" Beneath its wide-extended ſhade he ſtood;
" And there he'll wait, my honeſt word believe,
" Nor ſhall th' event your glowing hopes deceive."

Then

Then to the tree with eager haſte they flew,
There wonders ſtrange their wild attention drew;
For there in heaps their raviſh'd eyes behold
Buſhels of florins, all of pureſt gold.
Charm'd with the view, of Death they think no more,
But bend in raptures o'er the glittering ſtore:
Then he whoſe wily ſoul above the reſt
Dark craft had warp'd, his comrades thus addreſs'd:
" Brethren," he cries, " to what I ſpeak attend;
" Looſe though my life, I counſel ſage can lend:
" Fortune hath deign'd this unhop'd wealth to give,
" That we henceforth may gay and jovial live;
" And ſurely gold ſo found ſhould quickly fly,
" If mirth and jollity we thus may buy.
" But till we hence convey the glittering prize,
" In vain we view it with delighted eyes;
" By day we dare not tempt the public view,
" Leſt foul ſuſpicion ſhould our deeds purſue;
" Beneath all-conſcious night's protecting ſhade,
" Muſt the rich ſpoil in ſafety be convey'd;
" By joint conſent be fix'd th' impartial law,
" That each in fair ſucceſſion lots ſhall draw;
" Then of the three, by lot adjudg'd, ſhall one
" Quick to the town with prompt compliance run,

" Wine

" Wine and refreſhment various to obtain,
" The while the gold to watch the two remain."
The point agreed, he then with ſpecious care
The lots in order haſtens to prepare;
And thus it chanc'd, the leaſt the youngeſt drew,
And inſtant to the town obedient flew:
'Twas then the crafty knave, who firſt propos'd
The chance of lots, his deep-laid ſcheme diſclos'd.
" Brother, to thee, I truſt, it well is known,
" That I regard thy intereſt as my own.
" This gold, that's here diſplay'd in glittering pride,
" Thou know'ſt three equal portions ſhall divide:
" But if I now ſhould tell, and tell thee true,
" How theſe three portions we might bring to two,
" And only thou and I divide the whole;
" Should not I prove the friendſhip of my ſoul?
" Our comrade's gone refreſhments to prepare—
" Let then us two the precious treaſure ſhare!"
" How ſhall that be?" the other then replied,
" How may we hope the fraud from him to hide,
" If only we the glorious prize divide?"
" Canſt thou," the villain ſaid, " a ſecret keep,
" And let my counſel in thy boſom ſleep?"

" That

"That can I promiſe ſafe; nor night nor day,
He ſaid, "ſhall e'er thy confidence betray."
"Now then attend; if both at once aſſail
"His ſingle ſtrength, it ſurely ſoon ſhall fail.
"Thou firſt in wreſtling ſhalt his ſkill defy,
"And as in ſport his ſtrength with thine ſhall try;
"Then with ſure aim my dagger's point behind
"Shall through his loins a ready entrance find:
"And when he's down, thy hand, from ſtruggling freed,
"The ſtroke may ſecond, and complete the deed.
"Then all this gold ſhall truly parted be,
"My deareſt friend, 'twixt only you and me:
"Then may we each indulge our warmeſt will,
"And have of dice, and cards, and drink our fill."
Thus did thoſe two, for thirſt of murderous gain,
Devote their abſent comrade to be ſlain.
Meantime the youth, who to the town was ſent,
On the new florins all his thoughts had bent:
"Oh! would the fates," he ſaid, "my wiſhes bleſs,
"That I alone might all this gold poſſeſs;
"Beneath Heaven's canopy there none ſhould be,
"Who in mirth's gay delights ſhould vie with me."

Then

Then to his tainted ſoul th' inſidious fiend,
Man's watchful foe, his aid began to lend:
Of poiſon's ſubtle power the thought infus'd,
And how the potent medicine ſhould be us'd.
Then to a well-known leech he quick repairs,
To buy the drug that ends all human cares.
With ſemblance dark he tells a tale diſtreſs'd,
How hoſts of rats his plunder'd barn infeſt;
How night by night his fatted capons lay
Mangled and torn, the villain polecat's prey:
Therefore he begs ſome tried and certain cure,
That may from vermin's rage his houſe ſecure.
The leech reply'd, "I pleas'd obey your will,
"And quick the deſtin'd purpoſe will fulfil:
"Behold this drug; there lives not man ſo ſtrong,
"Whoſe being art moſt potent may prolong,
"Should but he taſte of it a ſingle grain:
"For ere a mile thou'dſt walk upon the plain,
"Thou ſure ſhould'ſt find him cold and breathleſs lay,
"Ne'er to behold again the face of day."
The fatal gift he takes with eager joy,
Then through the ſtreets, impatient to employ

Its

Its promis'd powers, he to the tavern haſtes;
There, his deſign to aid, rich wines he taſtes,
Mixes the poiſon with the luſcious draught,
Then in two bottles puts with treach'rous craft
The deadly potion, whilſt a third contains
The wine unmix'd and pure that yet remains.
Now to the wood all joyous he returns;
With thirſt of promis'd wealth his boſom burns:
But, ah! ſuperior force his craft defies;
His comrades both beſet him, and he dies.
This done, the one whoſe hard and ruthleſs heart
Firſt urg'd his friend to play a murderer's part,
Thus ſilence broke—"Away with coward fear!
"Now with gay wine," he ſays, "and jovial cheer,
"Let firſt our hearts be warm'd, and then the grave
"The corpſe its deſtin'd prize may duly crave."
Then takes the wine, and (ſo juſt fate ordain'd)
The poiſon'd flaſk into a bowl he drain'd;
Quaff'd the dire beverage, and with heart'ning ſmile
Gave it his friend, his terrors to beguile.
But ſoon they both its noxious vapours found,
And lifeleſs ſunk extended on the ground.
Thus fell they all (ſo will'd Heaven's juſt decree)
The victims of their deep-laid villainy.

Ah!

Ah! what is man? when his corrupted ſoul
Yields to debaſing ſin's uncheck'd controul!
Firſt ſenſeleſs drunkenneſs his paſſions fires,
Then riſe tumultuous ſtrong and fierce deſires;
Theſe urge him on to each atrocious deed,
Till to fell murder's crime at length they lead.
The ſlave of ſin, his heart no mercy knows,
Him he ne'er thinks of to whom all he owes,
From whom health, ſtrength, and life, and every bleſſing flows.
Now, gentle ſirs! may Heaven your faults amend!
But chief from avarice' baleful ſin defend!
Let each bring ſpoons or rings with grateful heart,
And to your Pardoner of your hoards impart!
Let each gay wife, if ſhe would ſave her ſoul,
Bring me her wool, and inſtant in my roll
In faireſt characters her name I'll place,
And ſhe ſhall ſure receive forgiveneſs' grace.
Come then! your offerings bring, and here as clean
As if ye ne'er by ſin had tainted been,
I'll ſtraight abſolve you from the guilty load,
And lead you ſafe to Heav'n's all bleſs'd abode;

For

For in my tale, good ſirs, I this forgot—
Pardons and relics in my pouch I've got;
Myſelf receiv'd them from the ſacred hand
Of th' holy Father; nor does England's land
Produce a fairer ſhew: ye then that pleaſe,
Here on the ground devout with bended knees,
If ſins your wounded conſciences aggrieve,
Sweet abſolution from my hands receive!
Unleſs ye better like, as on ye go,
(For in ſo long a journey ſins will grow)
Careful to take a pardon freſh for each,
At every town that in our way we reach:
But then forget not, friends, if this ye do,
Each time freſh pence to give both good and true.
Great is your comfort, that among you here
Ye have ſo good and kind a Pardoner;
Who's ſtill at hand as on your way ye ride,
At each miſhap that may by chance betide.
Who knows but from his horſe, of wine o'erfull,
Some hapleſs wight may fall, and break his ſkull?
And then what bleſt ſecurity 'twould be,
'Mongſt you to have a friend aſſur'd like me!
If right I gueſs, our Hoſt ſhall firſt begin,
For ſurely he's envelop'd moſt in ſin.

Come then, ſir Hoſt, your humble offering bring,
And every relic, every holy thing.
Give me one groat, and for a price ſo ſmall
Shall your unholy lips e'en kiſs them all.
" Nay," quoth the Hoſt, " no relics, I beſeech;
" As well might I ſalute thy reverend breech;
" And thou a relic of ſome ſaint might'ſt name,
" The part which modeſt nature hides in ſhame.
" But by the ſacred Croſs St. Helen found *,
" Would that my purſe with coilons did abound!
" Then holy relics would I all deſpiſe,
" And the dear current coin alone I'd prize."
Not one word more the Pardoner deigns return,
But his fierce eyes all wild with anger burn.
Then ſaid the Hoſt, " No longer will I jeſt
" With one whoſe captious temper's ſo confeſs'd."
On this the Knight, a mild and worthy man,
Anxious to heal diſpute, to ſpeak began.
" Pardoner," he ſays, " let ſoft forgiveneſs ſwage
" The warm effuſions of thy cauſeleſs rage:
" Mirth to promote is all our Hoſt intends;
" Give each his hand then, and again be friends!"
Thus did they each ſalute in friendly mood,
And cheerful all their deſtin'd way purſu'd.

* Sir J. Mandeville, c. vii. p. 93.—TYRWHITT, ver. 12885.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO THE

SHIPMAN'S TALE.

THEN high mine Hoſt upon his ſtirrups ſtands,
In act to iſſue forth his dread commands:
" This was a goodly tale in truth," he ſays,
" And well deſerves our liking, and our praiſe:
" You then, ſir pariſh prieſt, in turn prepare,
" For, by God's bones, ſome good and learned fare
" We all from you with anxious fondneſs wait;
" Grant then our wiſh, and quick your tale relate."
" Bleſs me!" the Parſon anſwers, " how you
ſwear!"
" Ah!" ſaid mine Hoſt, " good Jenkin! are you there?
" I ſmell a * Lollard in the wind," quoth he:
" Oh! what a tireſome ſermon his will be!"
" Nay,

* This is in character, as appears from a treatiſe of the time (Harl. Catal. n. 1666): " Now in Engelond it is a comun pro-
" tectioun ayens perſecutioun—if a man is cuſtomable to ſwere
" nedeles, and fals, and unaviſed, by the bones, nailes, and ſides

 " and

" Nay, by my father's ſoul, he ſhall not preach,
The Shipman ſays; " nor goſpel ſtrange ſhall teach.
" We all in God's almighty power believe,
" Nor will we texts new-vamp'd for old receive.
" Therefore, mine Hoſt, myſelf the next ſhall be,
" To claim the hearing of the company;
" And take my word, my good and jovial friends,
" None here ſhall doze before my ſtory ends:
" But well be ye aſſur'd, my tale will be
" Undeck'd with lore of ſage philoſophy,
" Or phyſic quaint, or terms of crabbed law—
" Of Latin there's full little in my maw."

" and other membres of Criſt, and to abſteyne fro othes nedeles
" and unleful—and reprove ſinne by way of charite, is mater
" and cauſe now why prelates and ſum lordes ſclaundren men,
" and clepen hem Lollardes, Eretikes, &c."
TYRWHITT, ver. 1291. vol. iii.

THE

THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

A Merchant at St. Dennis liv'd of yore,
Wiſe was he deem'd, for wealthy was his ſtore;
Mirthful and gay, and much by all careſs'd;
A beauteous wife his taſty choice had bleſs'd:
Yet who of revels gay may count the coſt?
Short is the fleeting joy, and ſoon is loſt.
But woe to him, whoſe purſe low drain'd and light
Muſt feel the charges of the feſtal night!
Wives muſt be clad in gay and new array,
And huſbands ne'er are thought of, but to pay:
'Tis them to honour, that in dance and ſong
Trip the light hours, and gayly glide along;
And if by chance the mean uncourteous lord
Cannot, or will not, ſuch expence afford,
Then (perilous adventure) muſt ſome friend
To the fair debtor kind aſſiſtance lend.
This Merchant kept a houſe of great reſort,
And daily crowded was his ſpacious court:
There all degrees and ranks in throngs repair,
His board was ſumptuous, and his wife was fair.

But 'mong the reſt the chief a Monk appears,
Fair was his face, and blooming were his years;
Mild was his aſpect, courteous was his mien,
And thirty winters ſcarce he yet had ſeen:
Long to each other, e'en from childhood, known,
The good man's friendſhip now had rooted grown,
And the Monk us'd his table as his own:
Of each it chanc'd the birth-place was the ſame;
This led the Monk relationſhip to claim;
The friendly Merchant ne'er the claim denied,
But proofs of kindneſs new each day ſupplied:
At length they ſwore, they both would firm remain,
Join'd, long as life endur'd, in friendſhip's ſacred chain.

Frank and munificent Dan John was deem'd,
And much for nobleneſs of ſoul eſteem'd;
For, ſkill'd in bribery's reſiſtleſs art,
Succeſsful through the houſe he play'd his part;
He knew each groom and lacquey by his name,
And fee'd them, high and low, whene'er he came.

It chanc'd at length, preparing to depart,
For crowded Bruges' great and well-known mart,
To his good friend, Dan John, the Merchant ſent,
To give him notice of his fix'd intent;

And

And begg'd him to his houſe forthwith to come,
And paſs ſome days ere yet he went from home.
Scarce did the Monk the Merchant's call receive,
Ere he with eaſe obtain'd his abbot's leave;
For in his convent much Dan John was lov'd,
For worth and prudence well by all approv'd.
His was the charge its wide domains t' o'erlook,
And of its intereſts full good care he took.
Now at the Merchant's houſe Dan John arrives,
And each to give him kindeſt welcome ſtrives.
With him, to grace St. Dennis' ſumptuous fare,
He brings two caſks of wine, of flavour rare;
And, as he's wont, in joy and mirthful play
Drinks, eats, and laughs the pleaſant hours away.
Thus had two days in mirth and joy been paſs'd,
But, ah! nor mirth nor joy may ever laſt;
On the third morn, intent on weightier cares,
The prudent Merchant all his books prepares,
T' inſpect with wonted caution his affairs.
Pent in his cloſet cloſe, and barr'd the door,
He with due care weighs well his various ſtore.
Meantime at early dawn Dan John aroſe,
And to the garden's airy terrace goes.

Long he had not been there, ere to him came
The Merchant's wife, the gay and buxom dame:
" Ah! couſin John," ſhe exclaims with feign'd ſurpriſe,
" Wherefore is this, thus early that you riſe?"
" Five hours of reſt, fair niece," he ſmiling ſays,
" The daily toil of nature well repays
" In thoſe, whoſe hearts no vexing cares corrode,
" Or conſcious guilt's intolerable load.
" But why doſt thou, good niece, ſo pale appear?
" Or thou art ſick, or elſe, full much I fear,
" Some dire diſaſter, or ſome wild affright,
" Hath kept thine eyes from ſlumber all the night."
" Ah!" ſhe replies, " the world but little knows
" My daily ſorrows, and my nameleſs woes;
" And ſoon I hence muſt fly, or life muſt end;
" For ah! what's life to her, who knows no friend?"
" Weep not," the Monk replied, " dear lovely fair;
" Nor yield thy ſoul a prey to dark deſpair:
" Confide thy ſorrows to my faithful breaſt,
" And truſt that there deep-buried they ſhall reſt:
" Slight not th' advice of one, thou know'ſt thy friend;
" If aid I may not, counſel I may lend;

" And,

" And, on this book I ſwear, life's lateſt day
" Shall ne'er my faith corrupt thy ſecrets to betray."
" To you, dear friend Dan John," replied the dame,
" Here on this ſacred book I ſwear the ſame;
" And, rather than betray thee, I will bear,
" That men ſhould limb from limb my carcaſe tear.
" Thou know'ſt," the dame begins, " Dan John, full well,
" The time allows not, elſe, oh! I could tell
" Such tales of hardſhips, which I long have felt,
" As ſoon would make thy pitying heart to melt;
" And, though thy couſin, and though ſighs are vain,
" 'Tis of my huſband that I thus complain."
" Couſin," the Monk with ſmiles replied, " to me!
" No more than is yon leaf upon the tree.
" That I him thus have call'd, I own, is true;
" But, ah! the cauſe, ſweet dame, was only you.
" Blame not the lie, my love, for thee inſpir'd;
" Near thee to live was all that I deſir'd:
" Then ere thy huſband comes, thy griefs impart,
" And eaſe the troubles of thy labouring heart."
" My deareſt friend Dan John," the lady cried,
" Would that the ſad recital I might hide!

" But

" But ſure, ſince time began, there ne'er was ſeen
" A wretch ſo vile, ſo hateful, and ſo mean:
" Yet 'mongſt the various wants that I endure,
" The want of caſh is what I leaſt can cure.
" Women, you know full well, expect to find
" Their huſbands generous, rich, and wiſe, and kind:
" So is not mine: yet on a certain day,
" His honour to maintain, I needs muſt pay
" An hundred franks; my ſacred word is paſs'd,
" Which if I break, that hour ſhall be my laſt.
" Lend me then, dear Dan John, theſe hundred franks,
" And, truſt me, you ſhall earn my warmeſt thanks."
" Madam," he ſaid, " ſo much I feel your grief,
" That here I ſwear to bring you quick relief;
" And, when your huſband's gone from hence away,
" Doubt not the franks I'll bring, the debt to pay:
" Now go," he ſaid, " and let us quickly dine;
" Be to your promiſe true, as I to mine."
" That will I do," ſhe ſays, with joyous air,
Then homeward haſtens, dinner to prepare:
This done, to rouſe her huſband next ſhe goes,
And at his door ſhe knocks with ſounding blows.
" Wherefore," ſhe ſays, " thus endleſs do you pore
" O'er muſty books, and dead, and uſeleſs ſtore?
" Think

" Think you Dan John the live-long day can faſt?
" Come down and dine; the hour's already paſt."
" Wife," he replied, in meek and ſoothing tone,
" Little to you a merchant's cares are known;
" Misfortunes daily thwart our honeſt pains,
" And nameleſs loſſes leſſen all our gains:
" Well then we need of ills like theſe beware,
" Bleſs'd if we 'ſcape them by unceaſing care.
" Soon as to-morrow's ſun awakes the day,
" To noted Bruges I muſt bend my way:
" Wherefore, I humbly pray thee, ere I go,
" Thine utmoſt prudence on my houſe beſtow:
" Well is it ſtor'd with all thy needs require;
" Uſe it with care is all that I deſire.
" Money thou ſhalt not want, thy purſe I'll fill,
" Rule but with prudence, and enjoy thy will."
This having ſaid, he ſhuts each well-ſtor'd box,
And with due caution faſt the door he locks;
And, having ſaid a haſty maſs, prepares
At his well-furniſh'd board to drown his cares.
Now watch'd the Monk the ſoft unguarded hour,
When the gay glaſs had wrought its genial power;
" Believe me, beſt of friends," he ſays, " my heart
" Sinks with unfeign'd regret, whene'er we part:
" Oft

" Oft I reflect, what ills may you betide;
" Mind then with ſpecial caution how you ride:
" Watch too your diet, ſparing be your meat,
" Ill ſuits repletion with the dog day's heat.
" Say, can I ſerve you, while from home you ſtay?
" Freely command me, or by night or day;
" To all my cautions due obſervance lend,
" And may kind Heaven protect you to the end.
" Yet, ere you go, I've this requeſt to make,
" That you will lend me, for our friendſhip's ſake,
" An hundred franks; and truſt me, on the day
" You name yourſelf, the favour I'll repay.
" For, truth to ſpeak, our convent to ſupply,
" Some beaſts my duty calls me ſoon to buy;
" But ne'er, I pray you, the tranſaction tell:
" Then beſt and deareſt friend, once more farewel!"
The Merchant then return'd this kind reply,
" How can I, friend, ſo ſmall a ſuit deny?
" Freely, the whole I have, your wants command;
" Take what you liſt, nor take with ſparing hand.
" One thing I need not ſay, for well 'tis known,
" The life of trade depends on wealth alone:
" Pay then, when beſt you may, what here I lend;
" My purſe aſſiſts well pleas'd ſo lov'd a friend."

Inſtant

Inſtant the hundred franks the Merchant gives,
Not with more joy the Monk the boon receives,
Who to his abbey now directs his way,
Pleas'd with the bright ſucceſs, that crown'd the day.
On the next morn the Merchant had begun
His deſtin'd journey with the riſing ſun:
With him an honeſt mate, and ſober guide,
His faithful 'prentice, ever us'd to ride:
Bruges they reach, and there without delay
(For ne'er his time he gave to dance, or play)
His deſtin'd purpoſe careful he purſues,
And with nice eye each chapman's ware he views.
On the next Sunday to St. Dennis came,
Freſh ſhorn and gay, Dan John, to ſee the dame:
There for the hundred franks ſhe yields her charms,
Th' expected payment, to his longing arms.
Yet was ſo high this crafty Monk eſteem'd,
That chaſte and virtuous he by all was deem'd.
The Merchant now, when ended was the fair,
Homeward bethinks him quickly to repair:
Thither arriv'd, with joy his wife he meets,
And gay and jocund every friend he greets;
Yet, as of coſtly price the goods he found,
He in agreement firm himſelf had bound,

The

The part remaining, on a certain day,
(Th' amount full twenty thouſand crowns) to pay.
This ſum, the object now of all his cares,
Forthwith to raiſe, to Paris he repairs;
But firſt (for thus a good and gentle mind
Friendſhip's nice laws before all others bind)
His eager footſteps to the convent fly;
There for Dan John he looks with anxious eye,
Not from his friend t' obtain the wanted gold,
His warmer heart but wiſhes to behold,
Now after abſence, him his ſoul eſteems,
Far more than happieſt miſer's golden dreams.
Him with profeſſions warm Dan John receiv'd,
And he, as true as warm, them all believ'd:
Then he began more fully to recount
What ware he'd purchas'd, and how great th' amount;
Which to defray, again from home he'd come,
In hopes in Paris he might raiſe the ſum.
"Believe," the Monk replied, "my joy ſincere,
"That ſafe return'd again I ſee thee here;
"Much I rejoice, to view thy blooming health,
"Nor leſs thy proſpect of increaſing wealth;
"And,

" And, could I lend the ſum thy wants require,
" No greater pleaſure would my ſoul deſire;
" For well my mind recals the generous aid
" You lent to me, which lately I repay'd
" To your fair wife, as ſhe to you will tell;
" For ſhe, I'm ſure, the fact remembers well.
" But, by your leave, I can no longer ſtay,
" For I muſt join our abbot on his way:
" Greet well our dame belov'd, mine own niece ſweet,
" And farewel, couſin dear, till next we meet."

The Merchant now obtain'd what he deſir'd,
And rais'd by loan the ſum his wants requir'd;
This in ſome Lombard's hands he quick beſtows,
And takes of them their bond for all he owes:
Blithe as a bird, he homeward bends his way,
For well he knew he ſtood in ſuch array,
That, by the venture, coſts and labour paid,
A thouſand franks would bleſs his thriving trade.

His wife, for ſo was wont the duteous dame,
Firſt to the gate to meet her huſband came;
Nor with more glee he e'er her ſmiles had met,
For rich he was, and clearly out of debt.

Yet he forgot not in her ear to tell
The words that from Dan John at Paris fell:

" In

" In truth, ſweet wife," he ſaid, " thou'rt much to blame,
" And might'ſt have caus'd me undeſerved ſhame;
" For it would ſorely much my ſoul have griev'd,
" To have aſk'd a payment, once before receiv'd:
" Ne'er then in future fail, I humbly pray,
" To tell me, if by chance, while I'm away,
" To thee a debtor ſhould his portion pay."
Fearleſs return'd the dame with quick reply,
" The falſe, th' audacious traitor I defy.
" One day ſome caſh he brought to me, 'tis true,
" Wherefore I ne'er enquir'd, nor with what view;
" A gift I deem'd it, out of love to you;
" And ſmall enough it was, for the good cheer
" He hath ſo oft enjoy'd ſo freely here.
" But ſince I ſee on me the debt is laid,
" Truſt me, ſweet ſpouſe, it ſhall be ſtrictly paid;
" Not in baſe coin, ſuch vulgar ſouls employ,
" With love I'll pay thee, and without alloy:
" Then be not wrath, ſince here the truth I own,
" For not in needleſs waſte the gold is flown,
" But, thee to honour, it is all apply'd,
" On pearls, and lace, and fifty things beſide:

" Now,

"Now then, beſt, deareſt comfort of my life,
"Kiſs, and forgive thy fond and faithful wife!"
The merchant found the grievance paſt redreſs,
And knew that chiding would not make it leſs;
Wiſely he pardon'd what he could not mend,
And his wife promis'd ſhe'd no more offend.

PROLOGUE

TO

THE PRIORESS'S TALE.

LONG, gentle Sailor, ſaith our jolly Hoſt,
May'ſt thou in ſafety ſail along the coaſt!
But ill, my maſters all, your peace betide!
If in your houſes Monks like this reſide.
Now gentles, 'mongſt ye all, which ſhall I find,
That the next tale to tell is moſt inclin'd?
Then mild and courteous, as a modeſt maid,
To the meek Prioreſs theſe words he ſaid:
"From you, ſweet lady, may I humbly crave,
"If ſo it like you, the next tale to have?"
"Gladly," ſhe ſaid, "I'll pleaſe you, if I can;"
And, when they all were ſilent, thus began.

THE PRIORESS'S TALE.

LORD of all power and might! thy glorious name
All things in heaven and earth alike proclaim;
And not the wiſe alone thy fame declare,
But babes and ſucklings in thy praiſes ſhare.
E'en I, with warm deſire to ſound thy praiſe,
Will boldly ſtrive my feeble voice to raiſe;
Nor thine alone, but her, thy mother dear,
My tale ſhall laud. O deign, bright Maid, to hear!
Thou Gem of purity! thou virgin Flower!
On whom in dove-like form th' eternal Power
Deſcended, by thy humble meekneſs won,
And bade thee ſinleſs hail a heav'n-born Son!
Where is the tongue ſo ſkill'd that e'er may tell,
What nameleſs virtues in thy boſom dwell?
Oft, ere the words from our warm lips are ſent,
Thy pitying kindneſs does our prayers prevent.
O lovely Queen! O bright heav'n-favour'd Maid!
Grant to thy ſuppliant thy all-potent aid!
For powers ſo mean, ſo infantine as mine,
Ill ſuit the grandeur of a theme divine.

Of yore a city ſtood on Aſia's plains
(Though time hath ſince deſtroy'd its laſt remains)
With Chriſtians fill'd, to fame it long had grown,
And far and wide its ſplendid name was known.
In it one ſtreet (a fair and noble ſpace)
Its lord aſſign'd to Abram's worldly race;
For ſtores of wealth the cunning deſpot knew
Would ſoon be found, where dwelt the uſurious Jew.
At the far end, upon a plot of green,
Neat and compact, a little ſchool was ſeen;
To this repair'd the infant Chriſtian tribe,
Inſtruction's early leſſons to imbibe:
'Mong theſe a widow's ſon, who day by day
Paſs'd through to ſchool, nor ever ſtopp'd to play;
When the bleſs'd Virgin's image e'er appear'd,
With bended knees the ſacred form rever'd.
His mind by early grace aright endued,
Conſtant his mother's precepts he purſued;
And, like St. Nicholas *, to the holy Maid
From earlieſt infancy due homage paid.

* We have an account of the very early piety of this ſaint in his leſſon—Brev. Roman. vi. Decemb. Cujus viri ſanctitas quanta futura eſſet jam ab incunabulis apparuit; nam infans cum reliquos dies lac nutricis frequens ſugeret, quartâ et ſextâ feriâ

Oft, while the well-taught choir their voices rais'd,
And the great Saviour's virgin Mother prais'd,
Wrapp'd in attention mute the child would ſtand,
(His book unheeded falling from his hand)
And as he durſt, he drew him near and near,
(For keen delight had baniſh'd boyiſh fear)
Now caught the words, and now th' harmonious note,
Till the firſt verſe at length he gain'd by rote.
Nought did he know, what ſenſe the words convey'd,
For which full oft his ſchool-fellow he pray'd,
On his bare knees beſought him to explain,
In his own language, what the words contain.
His playmate then, who older was than he,
" All that I can," replied, " I'll tell thee free.
" This ſong was made, as oft I've heard them ſay,
" To our dear Lady honour due to pay,
" And her to beg, her ſoothing grace to lend,
" When we approach life's ſhort and deſtin'd end:
" Here's all I know, to ſing is mine alone,
" Grammar's quaint art to me is little known."

feriâ (on Wedneſdays and Fridays) ſemel duntaxat idque veſperi ſugebat.—TYRWHITT, ver. 13444.

"And was this ſong indeed," the urchin ſaid,
"To honour Chriſt's heav'n-choſen Mother made?
"Then night and day I'll ſtrive with ceaſeleſs pain,
"Ere Chriſtmas comes, the ſacred words to gain,
"Though all unlearn'd my primer ſhould remain:
"For her to honour, joyful I would bear,
"Thrice in an hour, correction's ſtripes to ſhare."

Thus, by his playmate taught, more perfect grown,
He the whole hymn at length had made his own;
And as he paſs'd each day along the ſtreet,
Both morn and eve the words would he repeat.
'Twas then the Power accurs'd, the foe of man,
Hatred's fell rancour round to ſpread began:
"Is it, O Jews," he whiſper'd, "to be borne,
"That a mere child ſhall brave your beards with ſcorn?
"And in your ears ſhall daily ſound a name,
"That heaps your ancient honour'd law with ſhame?"
Soon their fell gall the venom'd words diffuſe,
And rouſe to vengeance the indignant Jews;
The child they doom to death; and ſoon procure
A murderer vile, their purpoſe to enſure.
In a dark alley plac'd his ſtand he took,
And watch'd the victim with impatient look;

And

And as the guileleſs infant paſs'd along,
And ſooth'd his ſpirit with his favourite ſong,
On him he ſeiz'd, and reckleſs inſtant flew,
And in a ſewer his mangled body threw.
But vain's the hope deeds deadly to conceal;
Murder's fell crime will ſure itſelf reveal *.
In vain the mother waits the tedious night,
In vain expects him with returning light;
He comes no more; diſtracted out ſhe flies,
And in each corner of the city pries:
But the ſad ſole relief her ſearch obtains,
(Solace full ſmall for all her anxious pains)
Is, that at evening, when from ſchool he paſs'd,
He in the Jewry had been ſeen the laſt.

* In St. Peter's church (at Trent) they ſhew the chapel of Little St. Simon, and ſay, that in 1276 the Jews ſtole one Simonin, or Little Simon, a ſhoemaker's ſon, in the 28th month of his age, and, after having killed the child in a moſt cruel manner, to drink his blood at one of their feaſts, threw his carcaſe into a water-pipe, which now paſſes to the houſe where it is pretended this murder was committed, and where their ſynagogue was at that time; but the body being carried from thence into the river, was found by ſome fiſhermen; when the affair being diſcovered, thirty-nine of the Jews were executed, and the reſt baniſhed the city for ever. Pope Sixtus IV. canonized the child. The ſame ſtory is painted at Francfort on the Maine, under the bridge gate.—*World Diſplayed*, v. 18. *Miſſon's Travels.*

Urg'd by that pang, that keen and poignant ſmart,
That only thrills the tender mother's heart,
She ſearch'd with ceaſeleſs toil each place around,
Where her fond hope preſag'd he might be found,
Calling, as on ſhe went, the heavenly Maid
Her warm deſires and anxious queſt to aid.
To ſearch among the Jews at length ſhe's wrought,
For every ſpot beſides in vain ſhe ſought.
Each Jew ſhe aſk'd with fond and earneſt prayer,
If he had ſeen her lovely infant there.
Each nay replied: but her prophetic ſoul,
Illum'd by ſacred truth's divine controul,
Loos'd her bold tongue; and, "Here," aloud ſhe cried,
"My child's conceal'd, 'twas here my darling died!"
'Twas then the Power Supreme, who oft deſcends
T' effect by ſmalleſt means his wiſeſt ends,
Ordain'd that to the bleſſed Virgin's praiſe
This murder'd child again his voice ſhould raiſe,
And from the noiſome pit with ſever'd throat
Should chant his favourite anthem's well-known note.
Mov'd by the infant's cries, ſo clear and loud,
The Chriſtians gather'd in a wond'ring crowd;
The provoſt ſoon they call'd, who inſtant came,
And, having reverence paid to th' holy name

Of

Of Chriſt our Lord, and of the Virgin pure,
Bade them in durance ſafe the Jews ſecure.
Rais'd from his murky grave with pious care,
To the next abbey thence the child they bear:
Still, as the ſad proceſſion moves along,
Still (ſtrange to tell) he chants th' unceaſing ſong;
Whilſt, Rachel like, upon the mournful bier
The mother pours the unavailing tear;
O'ercome with grief ſhe faints; with pious care
Home her ſad friends th' unconſcious ſufferer bear.
With vengeance juſt the provoſt now purſues
Each vile accomplice of the murderous Jews,
And with wild horſes each aſunder draws,
The hopeleſs victims to th' offended laws.
Now is the bier, with mournful enſigns grac'd,
In uſual pomp before the altar plac'd;
Then, maſs perform'd, the choir with ſolemn care
For the laſt ſad accuſtom'd rites prepare;
But inſtant as they pour'd the holy water,
He ſang, "O! alma Redemptoris Mater!"
The holy abbot then, for ſuch was he,
(At leaſt ſuch rev'rend abbots ought to be)
The murder'd child with ſuppliant voice addreſs'd,
And in theſe words his earneſt prayer expreſs'd:
"Child,

" Child, I conjure thee by the tender love
" Of the three heavenly powers that rule above,
" Tell me the cauſe, that with harmonious note
" Thy voice ſtill warbles through thy wounded throat!"
" Deep wounds," the child replied, " my throat divide,
" And I, ere now, by nature's laws had died,
" But that the holy Jeſus bade me live
" To his dear mother glory ſtill to give:
" Her, the ſweet ſource of Mercy's pitying tear,
" From earlieſt age I lov'd with warmth ſincere;
" And when my ſoul prepar'd to wing her flight
" To the dark regions of eternal night,
" To me ſhe came, and bade me, ere I died,
" To ſing once more the hymn, ſo late my pride.
" And when obedient I the hymn had ſung,
" She laid, methought, a grain upon my tongue,
" And thus ſhe ſpake—" Go on, dear child to ſing,
" And with thy notes make Heav'n's high concave ring;
" My name to honour pour thy ceaſeleſs ſtrain,
" Till from thy tongue be taken off this grain,
" Then hence to fetch thee I'll return again."

Inſtant

Inſtant the gentle abbot ſeiz'd his tongue,
And the ſmall grain upon the pavement flung:
This done, his ſweet harmonious numbers ceaſe,
And he ſinks tranquil to the realms of peace.
The tears faſt guſhing from the abbot's eyes,
Witneſs'd his ſorrow mix'd with ſtrange ſurpriſe;
At length his ſight was clos'd in night profound,
He ſwoon'd, and ſunk all lifeleſs to the ground.
The weeping choir, when now began ſubſide
The firſt ſoft flow of ſorrow's tender tide,
Forth from the church the mournful bier convey'd,
And in a marble tomb the infant laid.
Reſt, happy pious youth! and thou, ſweet Hugh,
Whoſe fame 'mong Lincoln's ſons ſo blooming grew!
Both doom'd alike to an untimely fate,
Victims unmeet for Jews' remorſeleſs hate!
Pour for our ſinful ſouls th' availing prayer,
And beg Heav'n's Judge to ſhield us from deſpair!
For his ſweet Mother's ſake his grace implore,
And henceforth, true to him, we'll ſin no more.

PROLOGUE

TO

SIR THOPAS.

THE wondrous tale complete, in thought profound
Each fix'd his eyes in ſilence on the ground;
All but our Hoſt, a gay and griefleſs man,
Who thus on me his merry jeſt began:
" Let thy ſad face," he ſaid, " one ſmile aſſume;
" Stand back, and make my ſlender friend more room:
" For with limbs ſmall and fine thy ſtature's grac'd,
" And thou like me art taper in the waiſt.
" Methinks ſome brawny houſewife thou might'ſt
charm,
" Like lap-dog carried warm beneath her arm.
" Sure thou ſome fairy art, ſome elfiſh ſpright;
" For to no man thou cordial doſt unite.
" Come tell ſome merry tale, and thus repay
" Th' unſocial ſilence thou haſt kept to day."
" Willing, good Hoſt, your mandate I receive,
" Accept this rhime, the beſt that I can give."

THE

THE

RHIME OF SIR THOPAS.

LISTEN, lordlings, to my ſong,
And a tale I will recite,
Of Sir Thopas, ſtout and ſtrong,
Known to all a valiant knight.

Born in foreign lands was he,
At Popering *, croſs the foaming main;
There his ſire, a baron free,
Held a rich and wide domain.

Mild and graceful was his mien,
In his cheek glow'd the blooming roſe,
And quick intelligence was ſeen
In his keen eye and high-arch'd noſe.

* Poppering, or Poppeling, was the name of a pariſh in the marches of Calais: our famous antiquary, Leland, was once rector of it.—Tanner, Bibl. Brit. in v. Leland.

TYRWHITT, v. 13650.

His

His robe was coſtly chekelatoun*,
His hoſe of Bruges brown,
His beard and locks of bright ſaffron
Flow'd to his waiſt adown.

Keen he purſued the falcon's flight,
Or chas'd the foreſt deer,
And wreſtling was his firſt delight—
In that he had no peer.

For him in love's ſequeſter'd bower
Full many a maiden pin'd;
But, deaf to lawleſs paſſion's power,
To none he e'er inclin'd.

And ſo it chanc'd upon a day
Sir Thopas out would ride;
Gallant he ſtrode his courſer grey,
His long-ſword by his ſide.

* Chekelatoun—The gloſſaries ſuppoſe this word to be compounded of *cheke* and *latoun*, a ſpecies of baſe metal like gold; but it ſeems rather to be merely a corruption of the Fr. *ciclaton*, which originally ſignified a *circular robe of ſtate*, from Gr. Lat. *cyclas*, and afterwards *the cloth of gold* of which ſuch robes were generally made. Du Cange in v. cyclas has produced inſtances enough of both ſenſes.—TYRWHITT, v. 13664.

His

His devious way the Knight purſued
All in a foreſt green,
Where undiſturb'd the ſylvan brood
In numerous herds were ſeen.

There cloves and nutmegs thick he views,
To ſcent the well-wrought cheſt,
Or, when due ſkill their powers infuſe,
The nut-brown bowl to zeſt.

Here gaily ſings the jocund thruſh,
There wails the plaintive dove,
While echo from each vocal buſh
Reſponſive ſhakes the grove.

'Twas here the ſoft and tender pain
Firſt ſeiz'd Sir Thopas' heart;
For when he heard the dove complain,
He felt the well-known ſmart:

Then fierce his furious ſteed he preſs'd,
And ſcour'd the bending wood,
The white foam curl'd upon his cheſt,
His ſides ran down with blood.

At length, with love and toil oppreſs'd,
He pull'd th' imperious rein,
And, in ſweet hope of balmy reſt,
He ſtretch'd him on the plain.

He ſlept—but when the cheering light
Of ruddy morn he ſpied,
" I've dream'd," he cries, " the live-long night
" An elf queen was my bride.

" Women henceforth I ſwear to hate,
" And all the ſex reſign;
" An elf queen is the only mate,
" That's worthy to be mine."

Inſtant he mounts, o'er ſtone and ſtile
In amorous queſt to ride,
And after many a toilſome mile,
He Fairyland eſpied.

For while he roam'd each part around,
So fierce did he appear,
That there nor wife nor child was found,
Who dar'd approach for fear.

At

At length a giant, huge and dread,
Unto Sir Thopas came,
And thus in haughty tone he ſaid,
(Sir * Oliphant was his name.)

" Who art thou, youth, who durſt demand
" The Fairy Queen to ſee?
" Know, ſo divine and chaſte a hand
" Diſdains a wretch like thee.

" Hence! nor prophane this ſacred place!
" Or dread my vengeance juſt.
" Hence! or, by Heav'n, this ponderous mace
" Shall grind thy bones to duſt."

* Sir Elephant, a proper name for a giant.—Mandeville, p. 283. " And there ben alſo many wylde beſtes, and nameliche " of olyfauntes." The very learned and ingenious author of Letters on Chivalry, &c. ſuppoſes " that the boke of the Giant " Olyphant and Chylde Thopas was not a fiction of Chaucer's " own, but a ſtory of antique fame, and very celebrated in the " days of chivalry." I can only ſay, that I have not been ſo fortunate as to meet with any traces of ſuch a ſtory of an earlier date than the Canterbury Tales.

TYRWHITT, v. 13739.

" Thy threats," th' indignant Knight replies,
" Proud Paynim, I diſdain.
" Arm'd, when to-morrow's ſun ſhall riſe,
" I'll meet thee on the plain.

" There thee my vengeful ſword ſhall teach,
" Bath'd in thy rancorous gore,
" How weak thine arm, though raſh thy ſpeech,
" For then thou'lt ſpeak no more!"

A ſtone he ſeiz'd, with fury fir'd,
From his huge ſling to throw;
But quick the watchful Knight retir'd,
And 'ſcap'd the deſtin'd blow.

Yet, though unharm'd he left the field,
With rage his boſom burn'd,
And, ſwearing that he ne'er would yield,
Again he ſoon return'd.

His merry men all he told with joy,
That knighthood's honour'd laws
Call'd him a Paynim to deſtroy
In beauty's ſacred cauſe.

Then,

Then, while he arms, around he calls
His minſtrels to recite
Tales, that are told in trophied halls,
Of knights renown'd in fight.

His pages, ere his arms he takes,
With ſkill and ſtudious care,
Sweet wine, and ſpice, and ſugar'd cakes,
Full ſpeedily prepare.

On his fair ſkin he firſt puts on
A ſhirt all white and pure;
His caſſoc next, and habergeon,
His heart's blood to ſecure.

Next he his hauberk on him caſt,
And then, as lily white,
His coat of mail he took the laſt,
And ſtood prepar'd for fight.

Red was his ſhield, on which a boar
With front terrific frown'd;
His giant-foe ſhould ſoon, he ſwore,
Fall breathleſs on the ground.

His ſword with poliſh'd ivory ſhone,
His helm was laton * bright,
And gleaming like the full-orb'd moon,
Shed luſtre on the night.

Of the tough cypreſs was his ſpear,
And perilous, I ween,
Were it to ſtand its fierce career,
Or tempt its point ſo keen.

Now, lordlings all, and ladies free,
Attend with gracious ear;
Love feats, and deeds of chivalry,
Delighted ye ſhall hear.

Let others wondrous tales reheaſſe,
Of Bevis and Sir Guy:
Sir Thopas ſwells my nobler verſe,
(The flower of chivalry.)

His ſteed he ſtrode, and forth he flew,
Like ſparkle out of brand;

* *Laton*, a kind of mixed metal, of the colour of braſs.

His

His creſt a tower wav'd fierce to view,
The while he ſcour'd the land.

Beneath the ſky the night he paſs'd,
His helm ſuſtain'd his head,
And with kind nature's rich repaſt
Himſelf his palfrey fed.

He, like the good Sir * Percival,
Drank of the cryſtal ſtream,
Till on a day———

* The romance of Percival le Galois, or de Galis, was compoſed in octoſyllable French verſe by Chreſtein de Troyes, one of the oldeſt and beſt French romancers before the year 1191. Fauchet, l. ii. c. x. It conſiſted of above ſixty thouſand verſes (Bibl. des Rom. t. ii. p. 250); ſo that it would be ſome trouble to find the fact which is probably here alluded to. The romance under the ſame title in French proſe, printed at Paris 1550, fol. can be only an abridgment, I ſuppoſe, of the original poem.—TYRWHITT, v. 13840.

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

" CEASE, ceaſe," our Hoſt replied, " my worthieſt friend,
" And bring thy tedious rhiming to an end!
" Fatigued already is each ſated ear,
" And more in truth we cannot, will not hear!"
" Since there's not one," I ſaid, " of all this crowd,
" But who his tale to tell hath been allow'd,
" Wherefore, moſt honour'd Hoſt, 'gainſt me alone
" Is this hard law, this partial barrier thrown?"
" The cauſe is this, that thou but waſteſt time,
" And in one word, thou ſhalt no longer rhime:
" Welcome in proſe ſome wholeſome tale rehearſe;
" Thy talent, truſt me, 's much unapt for verſe."
" Gladly I take," I ſaid, " your proffer'd leave,
" If in plain proſe my tale you will receive:
" Pleaſe you I hope it will, 'tis pure and ſound,
" A decent fable on a moral ground;
" Yet does it boaſt not to be wholly new;
" Many before have taught the ſame, 'tis true,
" And each hath plac'd it in a different view.

" Thus

" Thus when the four Evangeliſts record
" The death and direful ſufferings of our Lord,
" Each in unvaried order does not ſtate
" The ſame ſucceſſive actions they relate;
" Yet various though their manner, all unite
" T' atteſt the ſame great facts of which they write.
" Me too, my friends, if ye by chance detect
" To vary from the chain that ye expect,
" Your kind indulgence grant me, I beſeech,
" Nor as unfounded blame too ſoon my ſpeech:
" With patient candour lift to what I ſay,
" And let me tell my tale throughout, I pray."

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

MELIBEUS was a young man, rich and powerful, and had, by his wife Prudence, one only daughter, who was called Sophia. One day, having left his wife and daughter within his houſe, and having barred faſt the doors, he went out to divert himſelf in the fields, when four of his old foes came, and ſet ladders to the walls, entered in at the windows, and having beaten his wife, and wounded his daughter with five dangerous wounds in five ſundry places, they left her for dead, and went their way.

Melibeus on his return, ſeeing the outrage that had been committed, abandoned himſelf to rage, and, tearing his hair, and his garments, like a madman, gave himſelf up a prey to the moſt poignant ſorrow. His wife Prudence, as far as ſhe might venture, gently entreated him to abate the violence of his grief: but, notwithſtanding her entreaties, he did but perſiſt the more in his cries and lamentations. Prudence, well remembering the words of Ovid in his Remedy of Love,

Quis

Quis matrem, niſi mentis inops, in funere nati
Flere vetet?

" Who, but one deprived of reaſon, would forbid
" a mother, at the death of her ſon, to indulge
" the firſt burſts of her heartfelt afflictions?"

ſuffered her huſband undiſturbed to indulge his ſorrow for a while: but when ſhe diſcovered a fit occaſion, Wherefore does my beloved, ſhe ſaid, expoſe himſelf thus, like a man devoid of underſtanding? Sorrow ſo immoderate becomes not a wiſe man. Your daughter, guarded by the all-protecting ſhield of Providence, may probably yet recover: but even were ſhe now dead, you ought not, on that account, to abandon yourſelf to deſpair; for a wiſe man, ſaith Seneca, ſhall not for the loſs of children diſquiet himſelf too much, but ſhall await with patience as well their death as his own.—To this Melibeus anſwered, But, with cauſe of ſorrow ſuch as mine, where is the man that would refrain from grief? Our Lord himſelf wept at the death of Lazarus his friend. I freely own, replied Prudence, that moderate ſorrow is not forbidden; and to weep with thoſe that weep has, I know, the ſanction of St. Paul. But though moderate ſorrow is allowed, yet outrageous weeping

weeping is unlawful. When thy friend is dead, ſaith Seneca, let thine eyes be neither too moiſt, nor too dry; and although tears come into them, let them not fall. And when thou haſt loſt thy friend, do thy diligence to find another; in this is more wiſdom than to continue weeping for him, who never may return. If then thou wilt govern thyſelf prudently and wiſely, put away ſorrow from thine heart. Remember the words of Solomon, "A merry heart "doeth good like a medicine; but a broken ſpirit "drieth the bones." (Prov. xvii. 22.) And again, "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but "by ſorrow of the heart the ſpirit is broken." (Prov. xv. 13.)

Remember patient Job; when he had loſt his children and his goods, and his whole body was full of ſores, yet did he thus exclaim: "The Lord gave, "and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name "of the Lord." (Job i. 21.) To which Melibeus anſwered, Thy words indeed carry with them both conviction and inſtruction: but my heart, in truth, is ſo overborne with ſorrow, that I know not what to do. Call to thee, ſaith Prudence, thy friends and relations; and when thou haſt related to them thy diſtreſſes, attend to their counſel, and govern thyſelf by

by it; for thus ſaith Solomon, "Hear counſel, and "receive inſtruction, that thou mayeſt be wiſe in thy "latter end." (Prov. xix. 20.)

In obedience to his wife's advice, Melibeus called together a large congregation, as ſurgeons, phyſicians, old folk and young, and ſome of his old enemies, now apparently reconciled to his friendſhip; there came moreover ſome of his neighbours, who paid him reſpect, as is often the caſe more from fear than from love; there came alſo many a ſubtle flatterer, and ſome wiſe advocates learned in the law.

When theſe were all aſſembled, Melibeus, much affected by his injuries, declared to them his ſituation; and by the manner of his ſpeech diſcovered the deep reſentment that rankled in his heart. It appeared clearly to be his wiſh to reek ſpeedy vengeance on his foes: yet did he condeſcend to aſk counſel of his friends, though it was evident that he wiſhed inſtantly to commence hoſtilities. Upon this a ſurgeon roſe up, and thus addreſſed him:

As it is the duty of thoſe, who profeſs the art of ſurgery, to render to every man the beſt aſſiſtance in their power, but never on the contrary to cauſe miſchief to any one (for which reaſon it often happens, that when two men have wounded each other in fighting,

fighting, the ſame ſurgeon aſſiſteth them both), to encourage warfare is contrary to the principles of our profeſſion. But we will uſe with readineſs all the ſkill we have, and night and day apply our utmoſt diligence towards the recovery of thy daughter, who, though grievouſly wounded, may yet, by God's grace, be reſtored in ſafety to thine arms.

To this opinion accorded alſo the phyſicians, adding only, that as the maladies of the human frame are beſt cured by their contraries, ſo ought the effects of war to be healed by the balm of peace. But his falſe friends and flatterers made pretence of great ſorrow; and, deſirous of aggravating the matter, by ſetting forth the power and abilities of Melibeus, and by deſpiſing and leſſening that of his adverſaries, fanned the fire of his reſentment, and urged him to take arms.

Then an advocate roſe up, and ſaid, Sirs, the cauſe, for which we are aſſembled, is indeed of high and momentous concern, not ſolely on account of the great wickedneſs now committed, but as holding forth a wanton and flagitious example for the time to come; the great power alſo and rich eſtate of the parties makes it a matter of great concern, that we form a right and proper judgment of it. Wherefore,

fore, Melibeus, this is my counſel: That you take eſpecial care to guard your own perſon, and that you take into your houſe ſufficient force to guard it alſo: but ſuddenly to commence warfare for the gratification of your reſentment, is by no means adviſable, but rather take leiſure to deliberate thereupon; for the proverb ſaith, "He that decideth haſtily ſhall repent "quickly." It is well ſaid alſo, "He is a wiſe judge "that underſtandeth a matter quickly, but judgeth "leiſurely:" for though in general delay is dangerous, yet in giving judgment, or executing vengeance, it is reaſonable and becoming. Of this our Lord Jeſus Chriſt gave an example, when the woman who was taken in adultery was brought before him. For though he knew well within himſelf what anſwer he would give, yet he would not give it haſtily or without deliberation; but he wrote on the ground twice, intimating thereby, that when we would act rightly, we ſhould judge deliberately.

But the younger ones ſtarted up, and the greater part of the aſſembly deſpiſed the old wiſe man, and beginning to be clamorous, ſaid, that as while the iron is hot, then is the time to ſtrike; ſo men ſhould revenge their injuries while they are freſh and recent; and with loud voice they all cried out, Revenge,

venge, revenge. On which one of the elders roſe up, and with his hand made a ſignal for ſilence and attention; which being obtained, he thus expreſſed himſelf:

There is many a man, my friends, who crieth out war, war, yet conſidereth but little to what war amounteth.

War, at the beginning, hath ſo many ſpecious baits, and high-ſounding recommendations, that every unthinking mind is eaſily entrapped in it; but its events and conſeqùences few men conſider: for, when war is once begun, full many a child unborn ſhall either be ſtarved by its ravages, or elſe live in ſorrow, and die in miſery: it is for this cauſe, that, ere it is begun, men ſhould wiſely counſel and deliberate.——But when he was proceeding farther to enforce his reaſoning, they, almoſt all at once, began to interrupt his ſpeech, and bade him draw it into ſmaller compaſs. For, indeed, how can any one ſpeak agreeably to thoſe, who are averſe to his doctrines? For Jeſus the ſon of Sirach ſaith, "A tale "out of ſeaſon is as muſic in mourning." (Ecclus. xxii. 6.) In other words, it is of as little avail to ſpeak to thoſe, who diſlike your doctrines, as it is to ſing to him who is overwhelmed with ſorrow.

When,

When, therefore, this old man ſaw that he claimed no attention, he ſate him down again; for Solomon ſaith, "Speak not in the ears of a fool, for he will "deſpiſe the wiſdom of thy words." (Prov. xxiii. 9.) I ſee well, ſaid this wiſe man, that the old proverb ſpeaks truly, "Good counſel is moſt wanted, "when there is the greateſt need of it."

Melibeus had in his counſel many, who gave him one advice in private, but a quite contrary in public. He, therefore, when he heard that the greater part declared for war, yielded quietly to their opinion, and decided according to their judgment. Dame Prudence, when ſhe ſaw her huſband adopt theſe diſpoſitions, watching a proper opportunity, humbly ſpoke to him in this manner:

I beſeech you, my dear lord, that you be not too precipitate, but give patient hearing to what I ſay. Piers Alphonſe ſaith, whether a man do to you either good or evil, be not haſty to repay it; for thus ſhall thy friend continue ſteady in his friendſhip, and thine enemy ſhall live the longer in fear of thee. The proverb ſaith, "He maketh ſufficient haſte, who "waiteth patiently." And, "Indiſcreet haſte pro-"duceth no good."

To

To this Melibeus anſwered, Many reaſons weigh with me, that I ſhould not be governed by thy counſel; for, in the firſt place, by ſo doing, the world would count me but a fool, for having altered, by thy advice, thoſe plans and deciſions, which ſo many wiſe men have already ſettled and approved of. Secondly, women are all wicked alike; for ſaith Solomon, "One man among a thouſand have I found; but a "woman among all theſe have I not found." (Eccleſiaſtes vii. 28.) And moreover, ſhould I be governed by thy counſel, it would ſeem, which God forbid, that I had yielded to thee the guidance over me; for the ſon of Sirach ſaith, "Give not thy ſon, "and wife, thy brother and friend, power over thee, "while thou liveſt; for better it is, that thy children "ſhould ſeek to thee, than that thou ſhouldeſt "ſtand to their courteſy." (Ecclus. xxiii. 19, 21.)

It is beſides ſometimes needful, that counſel ſhould be ſecret, which might by no means be, were I to be counſelled by thee; for it is written, "The folly of "women can conceal nothing, ſave that which they "know not;" and afterwards the philoſopher ſaith, "In wicked counſels women exceed men." And for theſe reaſons I can pay no attention to thy advice.

When

When Dame Prudence had heard, with great patience and good humour, the whole that her huſband had been pleaſed to ſay to her, ſhe aſked leave of him to ſpeak again, and thus ſhe replied to him: My lord, ſhe ſaid, as to your firſt reaſon, that may eaſily be anſwered; for I ſay, that it is no folly to alter your determination, after that the ſubject matter itſelf is changed; or when the thing appeareth to be now otherwiſe than it did before: and I ſay moreover, that though you have promiſed, and ſworn to perform a certain thing, and nevertheleſs refrain from performing it for juſt cauſe, men may not therefore ſay, that you are falſe or forſworn; for the Book ſaith, "A man doth not act falſely, when he changeth his "mind for the better." And though the matter in queſtion hath been approved of, and reſolved on, by a great multitude of perſons; yet you ought not to perform it, if your better judgment tells you it is wrong; for ſage counſel in great matters is more to be expected to be found among the few, than among a multitude, where every one is partial to his own opinion, and among whom nothing is found in general, but vehemence and confuſion.

As for your ſecond reaſon, that all women are wicked, you by this cenſure ſhew your contempt of

the whole ſex; and "he, that all deſpiſeth," ſaith the Book, "all diſpleaſeth." And Seneca ſaith, "He that "would gain knowledge, ſhould deſpiſe no one; and "that, which he knoweth not, he ſhould not be "aſhamed to learn, even from thoſe who are inſe-"rior to himſelf."

But that there hath lived many a good woman, may very eaſily be proved; and ſurely our bleſſed Lord would not have condeſcended to have been born of a woman, had all women been wicked: and as a farther proof of their excellence, our Lord, after that he had riſen from the dead, made his appearance rather to a woman than to his apoſtles. And though Solomon hath ſaid, "That he never found a good "woman," it followeth not therefore that all women are wicked; for though he might not, yet many another man hath found a woman both good and true. But, perhaps, it was the intention of Solomon, to declare that he found no woman poſſeſſed of abſolute perfection, which is to ſay, in other words, that there is none good, ſave God alone, as he himſelf hath declared in his Goſpel. For, without doubt, there is no creature ſo good, but muſt fall greatly ſhort of the divine perfection.

Your

Your third reaſon is this—You ſay, that, if you govern yourſelf by my counſel, it ſhould ſeem, as if you had reſigned to me the guidance and direction of your perſon. But in that alſo, I humbly preſume, you are miſtaken; for, if that were the caſe, that no one ſhould be counſelled, but by thoſe, who have the abſolute rule and dominion over them, men would not take counſel ſo often as we ſee they do; whereas in fact, whoever aſketh advice of another, is perfectly free to chooſe whether he will follow ſuch advice or not.

Your fourth reaſon declareth, that the idle tongues of women can keep nothing ſecret, but that, which hath been never known to them. Now, theſe words are to be underſtood of thoſe women only, who are confeſt prates, and of an ill mind. With regard to ſuch has obtained this ſaying, that "there be two "things, which are enough to baniſh any man from his "houſe, a ſmoky chimney, and a prating wife;" and of ſuch women Solomon ſaith, "It is better to dwell "in the wilderneſs than with a contentious and angry "woman." (Prov. xxi. 19.) And, ſir, by your leave, that am not I, for you have many a time had proof, as well of my great ſilence, as of my patience,

and that whatever requireth to be kept ſecret, that I can keep moſt ſtrictly.

As to your fifth reaſon, in which you ſay, that in evil counſels women exceed men, in this inſtance moſt ſurely that reaſon can have no weight: for in the matter that is before us, you require the counſel and the ſanction of your friends, to do that which is unlawful. If then your wife wiſhes by her advice to reſtrain your wicked purpoſe, ſhe is certainly deſerving rather of commendation, than of cenſure. It is in this ſenſe you ſhould underſtand the words of the philoſopher you allude to. In wicked counſels, that is, when men counſel wickedly, their wives over-rule them. And, in truth, many and various examples I can bring to you, where the counſels of women have proved ſalutary and wholeſome. Some men will ſay, indeed, that the counſels of women are either too dear, or of too little value: but although I allow, that many a woman be worthleſs, and her advice vile and dangerous; yet, on the other hand, hath many a man found great profit and advantage, from the diſcreet counſel he hath received from the woman he hath adviſed with. By the wiſe counſel of his mother, Rebecca, Jacob obtained the bleſſing of his father,

father, and the dominion over his brethren. Judith, by her ſage counſel, delivered the city Bethulia from the hands of Holofernes, who would ſoon otherwiſe have deſtroyed it. Abigail delivered Nabal her huſband from the rage of king David, and afterwards, by her wit and prudence, appeaſed the anger of the king. Heſter, by her wiſe conduct, aſſiſted greatly the people of God in the time of king Ahaſuerus; and in many a woman more hath hiſtory recorded the ſame virtue and diſcretion.

Moreover, when our Lord had created Adam, he ſaid, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will "make him an help meet for him." (Gen. ii. 18.) Now, if women were not good, nor their counſel profitable, God would not have made them, and called them the help of man, but rather his confuſion. A wiſe clerk once ſaid, "What is better than gold? "Jaſpre. What is better than jaſpre? Wiſdom. "And what is better than wiſdom? Woman. And "what is better than a good woman? Nothing." Theſe, ſir, and many other reaſons, that I might advance to you, prove that women are good, and their counſel profitable; and if you will truſt to mine, I will engage to reſtore to you your daughter in ſafety,

and that the buſineſs ſhall finally redound to your honour.

When Melibeus had heard theſe words of his wife Prudence, I ſee, ſaid he, that the words of Solomon are true, which ſay, "Pleaſant words are as an honey-"comb, ſweet to the ſoul, and health to the bones." (Prov. xvi. 24.) And, wife, becauſe of thy ſweet words, and that I have proved and tried thy great wiſdom and truth, I will guide myſelf in all things by thy counſel.

Now, ſir, ſaith Dame Prudence, ſince that you vouchſafe to be governed by my counſel, I will inform you how you ſhould guide yourſelf in your choice of wiſe counſellors. You ſhould, firſt of all, in whatſoever work you undertake, beſeech Almighty God, that he would be your counſellor, and to frame your mind to ſuch a diſpoſition, that you may both counſel and comfort, as Tobit taught his ſon. "Bleſs the Lord thy God alway, and deſire of "him, that thy ways may be directed, and that all "thy paths and counſels may proſper." (Tob. iv. 19.) St. James alſo ſaith, "If any of you lack "wiſdom, let him aſk of God, that giveth all men "liberally, and upbraideth not." (James i. 5.)

And

And afterwards, "Ye fight and war, yet ye have "not, becauſe ye aſk not. Ye aſk and receive not, "becauſe ye aſk amiſs. For ye ought to ſay, If the "Lord will, we ſhall live, and do this, or that." (James iv. 2, 3. 15.)

Firſt, he that aſketh advice, muſt certainly be free from anger; for he that hath great wrath never conſidereth at all, whether the thing he would do be lawful or unlawful. And ſecondly, he that is in great wrath, cannot form a right judgment; and he that cannot form a right judgment, cannot take good counſel. And thirdly, as ſaith Seneca, "He "that is given to wrath, ſpeaketh offenſive words, "and exciteth others to anger and reſentment."

Beſides this, ſir, you muſt baniſh covetouſneſs from your heart; for the Apoſtle ſaith, "The love of "money is the root of all evil." (1 Tim. vi. 10.) And, believe me, a covetous man hath none other thought, but to fulfil his deſires; and yet this may never be accompliſhed; for the more he aboundeth in riches, the more he deſireth. And with equal care you muſt baniſh haſtineſs from your heart; for how can any man determine for the beſt, when he acts upon a ſudden thought? He muſt the rather ponder upon it often; for, as you heard before the words of

the old proverb, " He that judgeth haſtily, repenteth " quickly."

You know, you do not yourſelf always continue in the ſame opinion, and that which appears to you adviſable to do at one time, appeareth contrary at another. When, therefore, you have well conſidered, and have determined on, what ſeemeth the beſt in your own eyes, it is my advice, that you keep your counſel to yourſelf. Diſcover to no one your reſolves, unleſs the circumſtances of your ſituation require you ſo to do; for the ſon of Sirach ſaith, " Whether it be to a friend or foe, talk not of other " men's lives; and if thou canſt without offence, re- " veal them not; for he heard, and obſerved thee, " and when time cometh, he will hate thee." (Ecclus. xix. 8, 9.) Another ſaith, " Scarcely mayeſt " thou find any one, who will keep thy counſel ſe- " cretly." The Book ſaith, " While thou keepeſt " thy counſel in thine heart, thou keepeſt it in thy " priſon; and when thou betrayeſt it to any one, he " holdeth thee in a ſnare: and therefore it is better " for thee to hide thy counſel in thine own breaſt, " than to pray him, to whom thou doſt communi- " cate it, to keep it ſecret." For Seneca ſaith, " If

" thou

" thou canſt not keep thine own counſel, how canſt " thou expect that another will ?"

And if thou haſt reaſon to think, that thy communicating thy ſecrets to another may be of benefit and advantage to thee, thou ſhalt communicate them in this manner. Firſt, thou ſhalt conceal entirely what thine own preference be; for be aſſured, that ſuch counſellors are moſt times flatterers, I mean the counſellors of great men, who rather ſtudy to ſpeak agreeably, and according to the wiſhes of their great friend, than to give ſuch counſel, as is honeſt and profitable; and therefore it is ſaid, " that rarely " doth a great man obtain good counſel, if he do " not find it within himſelf." After that, thou ſhouldeſt conſider thy friends and thine enemies. And among thy friends thou ſhouldeſt conſider thoſe that are moſt faithful, and moſt wiſe, thoſe that are advanced, as well in reputation, as in years; and of them thou ſhouldeſt aſk counſel, as the caſe requireth.

I ſay, thou ſhouldeſt firſt call to thy counſel thy friends that are true; for Solomon ſaith, " Ointment " and perfume rejoice the heart, ſo doth the ſweetneſs " of a man's friend by hearty counſel." (Prov. xxvii. 9.) He ſaith alſo, " Loving favour is rather to be " choſen,

" choſen, than ſilver and gold." (Prov. xxii. 1.) And again, " A faithful friend is a ſtrong defence, " and he that hath found ſuch an one hath found a " treaſure." (Ecclus. vi. 14.) Next, you ought to conſider whether your true friends be wiſe and diſcreet; for the Book ſaith, " Always aſk counſel " of thoſe that are wiſe:" for which reaſon you ſhould conſult in preference thoſe that are advanced in years, ſuch as have been experienced in the tranſactions of the world, and whoſe counſels have been of old approved; for the Book ſaith, " In old men " is found wiſdom, and of long time cometh pru- " dence." And Tully ſaith, " Great things are not " accompliſhed by ſtrength, or activity of body, but " by counſel, by weight of character, and by know- " ledge, which three things do not decay by eye, but " increaſe from day to day."

But, moreover, keep this for a general rule of conduct, to call always to your counſel ſome known and eſpecial friends; for Jeſus Sirach ſaith, " Be in peace " with many; nevertheleſs have but one counſellor " of a thouſand." For although at firſt thou communicate thy counſels to but a few, thou mayeſt afterwards communicate them to more, if there be need; but take care always, that thy counſellors have the

the three before-mentioned qualifications, that they be true, that they be wiſe, and of long experience: nor govern thyſelf alway by one counſellor alone; for it is ſometimes needful to be counſelled by many; and Solomon ſaith, "In the multitude of counſellors "there is ſafety." (Prov. xi. 14.)

Having now told you, who are the people you ought chiefly to conſult, I will now teach you what counſels it is your duty to avoid. Firſt, you ſhould avoid the counſelling of fools; for the ſon of Sirach ſaith, "Conſult not with a fool; he cannot "keep counſel." (Ecclus. viii. 17.) The Book ſaith alſo, "The property of a fool is this, to believe "without reaſon all evil of others, and without rea- "ſon all good of himſelf."

You ſhould take care alſo to avoid the counſelling of flatterers, who ſtrive to pleaſe you rather by the praiſing of your perſon, than by telling you the truth. Wherefore Tully ſaith, "Among the peſti- "lences of friendſhip, the greateſt is flattery:" and there is more need for thee that thou dread and avoid flatterers, than any other people in the world. The Book ſaith, "Thou ſhalt rather dread and "fly from the words of flattering praiſes, than from "the eager expreſſions of a friend, who telleth thee

"the

"the truth." And Solomon ſaith, "A man that "flattereth his neighbour ſetteth a net." (Prov. xix. 5.) And therefore Tully ſaith, "Incline not "thine ears to flatterers, and take no counſel of their "words." And Cato ſaith, "Adviſe thee well, and "flee from words of ſweetneſs."

Thou ſhouldeſt alſo avoid the counſelling of thine old enemies, that are ſince reconciled. The Book ſaith, "No man returneth ſafely into the favour of "his old enemy." And Æſop ſaith, "Truſt not to "them, with whom thou haſt had ſometime war "and enmity, nor tell them thy counſel." And Seneca telleth the cauſe why. "It cannot but be," ſaith he, "where great fire hath long remained, "but that there ſhould ſtill continue ſome degree of "warmth." And, therefore, ſaith the ſon of Sirach, "Never truſt thine enemy." (Ecclus. xii. 10.) And, truly, though thine enemy be reconciled, and make ſhew of ſubmiſſion to thee, never truſt him, for he maketh ſhew of ſubmiſſion more to ſerve his own purpoſe, than to do thee honour; and becauſe he thinketh to gain the advantage over thee, rather by feigned friendſhip, than by victory in battle.

And Peter Alphonzo ſaith, "Make no fellowſhip "with thine old enemies; for if thou do them ſervice, "they

"they will pervert it to a bad purpoſe." Thou ſhouldeſt avoid alſo all counſelling with thy dependants, and thoſe who bear thee great reſpect; for perhaps they feign it more from fear than from love. And therefore thus ſaith a philoſopher, "No man is ſincerely "true to him of whom he is afraid." And Tully ſaith, "The empire of no potentate can long con-"tinue, who is not beloved by his people, more "than feared."

Thou ſhouldeſt avoid alſo all counſelling with thoſe who are given to drunkenneſs, becauſe ſuch can keep nothing ſecret.

Thou ſhouldeſt alſo always have ſuſpicion of the counſels of thoſe, who give thee one advice in private, and a quite different in public; for thus ſaith Caſſiodorus: "It is a feint, rather to be practiſed on an "enemy, to appear publickly to do one thing, but to "do in ſecret quite the reverſe."

Thou ſhouldeſt alſo have ſuſpicion of the counſels of the wicked, for it is ever full of deceit; and David ſaith, "Bleſſed is that man, that hath not "walked in the counſels of the ungodly." (Pſal. i. ver. 1.)

I will next tell thee in what manner thou ſhouldeſt examine thy counſels, according to the advice of Tully.

In

In the firſt place, take heed thyſelf, that in the matter on which thou aſkeſt counſel, thou tell the plain truth; for no one can expect good advice, if he ſtate not his caſe fairly. Thou ſhouldeſt next conſider, whether the object which thou art deſirous of obtaining be conſiſtent with reaſon, and within the compaſs of thy abilities; and whether the more reſpectable of thy counſellors ſanction and approve it.

Thou ſhouldeſt next conſider the conſequences of this thine intended undertaking, and, without being biaſſed by other views, ſhouldeſt determine on that only, which promiſes the beſt iſſue. Thou ſhouldeſt next examine the motives and cauſes from whence thy deſires ſpring; and when thou haſt conſidered them in all points of view, and haſt ſubmitted them to the advice of the wiſe and the experienced, thou ſhouldeſt again conſider, whether thou haſt abilities to carry them into execution. For ſurely no man ſhould attempt a thing, unleſs he can perform it as he ought; for the proverb ſaith, "He that attempt-"eth too much, performeth little." And this is the advice of Cato, "Attempt only ſuch things as are "within thy power, leſt the weight of thy under-"taking be too great for thee, and thou be forced,

"when

"when thou haſt begun it, to relinquiſh it unfi-
"niſhed."

And if thou haſt any doubt, whether thou art able to do it or not, rather decline it, than undertake it. And Peter Alphonſe ſaith, "If thou art able to per-
"form it, but haſt reaſon to believe thou ſhalt re-
"pent it afterwards, it is better that thou deſiſt from
"it." But when thou haſt well conſidered both the reaſonableneſs of the thing as well as thy power to perform it, perſiſt till thou haſt completed it. But it is now time that I explain to thee at what time, and upon what occaſion, thou mayeſt change thy determination without reproach. This thou mayeſt do, whenever there is a change in the cauſes, that actuated thy former counſels, or when new cauſes ariſe; for the Law ſaith, "New circumſtances de-
"mand new counſels:" and Seneca ſaith, "When
"thy counſels have reached the ears of thine ene-
"mies, it is good to change them." Thou mayeſt alſo change thy determination, when thou findeſt that, through error, or any other cauſe, miſchief may ariſe from it, or whenever it is itſelf bad, or ſpringeth from a bad motive; for the Law ſaith, "That all
"unlawful promiſes are void in themſelves, and are as
"nugatory as if they were impoſſible."

And

And take this for a general rule, that counſel which is aſſerted to be ſo firmly fixed, that it may on no conditions be changed, that counſel I ſay is wicked.

Melibeus, when he had heard the doctrines of his wife Prudence, thus anſwered her: You have hitherto taught me only in general terms, how I ſhould conduct myſelf in regard to the attention I ſhould pay to my counſellors: but I now deſire that you would more particularly inform me what your opinion is of the counſellors I have already choſen.

I beſeech you, my dear lord, ſaith ſhe, in all humility, that you will not take offence, if I ſay what perchance may be diſagreeble to your feelings; for, God knows, my ſole deſign is to give you ſuch advice as may be both honourable and beneficial to you; and I hope, therefore, that your goodneſs will take what I ſay patiently. And in truth, as to your preſent counſels (if indeed they may be called counſels, and not, as they really are, rather the movements of folly), in theſe you have, in many reſpects, been guilty of great error.

Firſt, you have been guilty of error in thus aſſembling your counſellors; for you ſhould have firſt called together a few only, and you might afterwards have conſulted

conſulted more, had it been neceſſary. But you have now called together a great multitude of a ſudden, whoſe counſels are as great an impediment to your views, as they are troubleſome and diſagreeable.

Again, you have been guilty of error, for, inſtead of having called to you your experienced and truſty friends, you have aſſembled the young and the unknown, falſe flatterers, and reconciled enemies, and thoſe who do not love you, but only pay you outward reſpect.

Again, you have been guilty of error, in that you have brought to your counſel, anger, covetouſneſs, and haſtineſs, three things totally incompatible with every wiſe counſel; and theſe paſſions you have neither extinguiſhed in yourſelf, nor in your counſellors, as you ought.

You have erred alſo, in that you have previouſly diſcovered to your counſellors, that you have revenge in your heart, and that your wiſh is to make war; and they having from your words diſcovered in you this inclination, have given you the advice that they think is agreeable, but not ſuch as is beneficial.

You have erred alſo, in that you ſeem to be ſatisfied with theſe counſellors only, and with the little deliberation with which their counſels have been

weighed; whereas, in ſo high and momentous an affair, you ſhould have had recourſe to more adviſers, and have uſed greater deliberation.

You have erred alſo, in not having examined and ſcrutinized your counſellors, in the manner, and as the caſe demands.

You have erred alſo in this, that you have made no diſtinction between your true friends, and feigned ones. You have not ſought to know the opinion of the old, and of thoſe of experienced wiſdom; but have been guided merely by the majority of voices. And as you well know, that fools exceed wiſe men in number, whoever in great aſſemblies pays regard rather to numbers, than to the weight and wiſdom of characters, reſigns thereby the maſtery in ſuch aſſemblies to fools.

I grant, returned Melibeus, that I have been in great error: but as thou haſt heretofore declared, that he is not to blame, who, in certain caſes, changes his reſolution, I am now ready to alter mine, in the manner thou ſhalt recommend. For the proverb ſaith, "To ſin is human, but to perſiſt in it "is diabolical."

To this replied dame Prudence, Let us examine well your counſellors, and let us ſee which of them hath

hath ſpoken moſt reaſonably, and hath given you the beſt advice: and to begin firſt with thoſe, who ſpoke firſt in order; I tell you, that the ſurgeon and phyſician have ſpoken to you the moſt wiſely; for they have told you, it is their duty to do good to men, but not miſchief. And having anſwered to you thus wiſely and diſcreetly, it is my judgment, that they be handſomely and honourably rewarded; which will cauſe them to be more diligent in their attention to your daughter; for though they be your faſt friends, it is not right that, on that account, they ſhould ſerve you without reward. And with reſpect to that doctrine propounded by the phyſicians, that the maladies of the human frame are healed by their contraries, I beg you will explain to me, what you underſtand from it.

I underſtand, ſaith Melibeus, that when one man hath done to me an injury, that is, a thing contrary to right, I may do the ſame to him, and then I cure one contrary by another.

Alas! alas! ſaid Prudence, how eaſily every man inclines to his own will!—Moſt ſurely the phyſician's words are not to be underſtood in that ſenſe; for undoubtedly wickedneſs is not contrary to wickedneſs, nor vengeance to vengeance, nor wrong

to wrong; but each of them increaſeth and aggravateth the other. But this is the ſenſe in which theſe words ſhould be underſtood: That goodneſs and wickedneſs are two contraries; and peace and war, vengeance and patience, and many other things. Wickedneſs, therefore, ſhall be healed by goodneſs, war by peace, and vengeance by patience: and to this the Apoſtle Paul in many places agreeth, "See that none render evil for evil unto any man." (Theſ. i. 5. 15.) "Not rendering evil for evil, or "railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing." (Peter i. 3. 9.)

But I will now ſpeak of the counſel that was given to thee by the men of the law, and by the wiſe and the experienced: they, above all things, recommended that thou ſhouldeſt guard thy perſon, and defend thine houſe; and ſaid moreover, that, in a caſe like thine, thou oughteſt to act with great caution and deliberation. As to the firſt point, that of the guard of thy perſon, thou ſhouldeſt well underſtand that whoever goeth to war, ought, before all things, meekly and devoutly to implore our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would grant him his protection, and be his ſovereign help in time of need; for on earth ſurely no man is ſafe, unleſs he be under his ſhelter

ſhelter and protection. To this opinion accordeth the prophet David, who ſaith, "If God keepeth not "the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Now, therefore, thou ſhouldeſt commit the guard of thy perſon to thy known and tried friends; for Cato ſaith, "If thou have need of help, aſk it of "thoſe you well know; for there is no better phy- "ſician than a faithful friend." But after this, you ſhould keep away from both ſtrangers and liars, and be on your guard ever in their company; for Pier Alphonſe ſaith, "Make no friend of any one, whom "you have not known for a long time; and if by "chance you fall into company with a ſtranger, make "all the enquiry in your power of his life and con- "verſation; and rather diſſemble your deſigns than "let him into the knowledge of them; and if he "bear a ſpear, hold you on the right ſide; but if he "wear a ſword, keep you on his left." Thou ſhouldeſt, therefore, keep thyſelf diſcreetly out of the way of ſuch perſons, and avoid their counſels above all things. Thou ſhouldeſt take heed alſo, that, preſuming too much on thine own ſtrength, thou do not too lightly eſteem thine adverſary; for every wiſe man dreadeth his enemy. And Solomon ſaith, "Happy is the man, that feareth alway; but he that

"hardeneth his heart, ſhall fall into miſchief." (Prov. xxviii. 14.) Thou ſhouldeſt alſo guard againſt treachery; for Seneca ſaith, "He that ſuſ-"pecteth evil, avoideth evil; and no man falleth "into perils, that guardeth againſt them." And although thou think that thou art in a place of ſafety, nevertheleſs be on thy guard, nor be leſs negligent in expoſing thyſelf to a ſmall enemy than to a great one. "A man," ſaith Seneca, "that is well "adviſed, is cautious, even of his leaſt enemy." Ovid ſaith, "That the little weaſel will ſlay the "great bull and the wild hart." And the Book ſaith, "A little thorn may prick a king full ſore; "and a little hound will hold the wild boar." But I do not therefore adviſe thee to be a coward without cauſe.

Now, as to the ſecond point, in which thy counſellors adviſed thee to keep diligent ward over thine houſe, I would fain know, in what ſenſe that advice is underſtood by thee.

Melibeus anſwered, and ſaid, I underſtand by this advice, that, by means of towers, and caſtles, and of all ſorts of defenſive arms, I might prevent mine enemy from approaching my houſe. To which Prudence replied, The defence of towers and caſtles

tles is attended with great expence, and far greater trouble; and, when completed, they are of no uſe, unleſs they be defended by brave and ſteady friends: but the ſafeſt defence and garriſon a rich man can have, is to be well beloved by his neighbours and dependants; for Tully ſaith, "There is a ſtrong hold, "which no man may overthrow—a prince beloved "of his citizens and his people."

Now, as to the third point, in which thy counſellors adviſed that thou proceed not haſtily in this matter, but that thou uſe in it great caution and deliberation—In this, I think, they counſelled thee wiſely and diſcreetly; for Tully ſaith, "In every "undertaking, ere thou begin it, prepare thyſelf "with great diligence:" and I tell thee, that in providing for war, and in furniſhing of garriſons, thou oughteſt to prepare thyſelf with great deliberation; for Tully ſaith, "That long preparation "before battle maketh a ſhort victory." And Caſſiodorus ſaith, "The garriſon, by how much the more "deliberately it hath been planned, by ſo much is it "the ſtronger."

But let us now attend to the counſel, that has been given to thee by thy neighbours; by thoſe, who, without regard, pay thee outward reſpect, by

thine old enemies reconciled, and by thy flatterers, who have given thee one counſel in private, but a quite contrary in public; and by the young, whoſe advice it was, to commence war without delay. Thou haſt certainly erred greatly, in having called ſuch people to thy counſel, the weakneſs of whoſe opinions has been proved by the reaſons before given. But let us now examine them particularly, and we will firſt proceed according to the rules of Tully.

As to the matter of fact, of that we need take no great time to enquire, becauſe the injury itſelf, the number of the offenders, and the manner of the offence, are all ſufficiently notorious. We will next examine, according to Tully, the *conſenting*, that is, who they are, and what they are, and how many, that conſent to thine own deſires of taking ſpeedy vengeance; and let us conſider alſo, who they are, and what they are, and how many, that conſent to thine adverſary. As to the queſtion, it is well known what thoſe are who conſented to thine own deſires; for thoſe who could counſel thee to take ſpeedy vengeance, were not thy true friends.

Let us next conſider, who thoſe are, whom thou eſteemeſt thy particular friends; for though thou art thyſelf opulent, thou art almoſt but an individual; for

for thou haſt no child, but one daughter, no brothers, no couſins, no near kindred at all, the dread of whoſe reſentment might reſtrain thine enemies from deſtroying thee. Thou knoweſt moreover, that at thy death thy riches will be divided; and when each hath obtained his portion, he will think very little of revenging thy wrongs. But thine adverſaries are three in number, and they have many brethren, and couſins, and children, and other kindred; and wert thou even to ſlay two of them, yet enough would remain alive to revenge their death, and to enſure thine in return. And though thy kindred may, perhaps, be more firmly attached to thee, than the kindred of thine adverſaries, yet, nevertheleſs, the relationſhip is but diſtant; whereas, theirs is quite near, and gives them, therefore, a great advantage over thee.

Let us next attend to thoſe, who adviſed thee to take ſpeedy vengeance, and conſider whether ſuch advice be conſiſtent with reaſon. Thou knoweſt it is not ſo; for no man by right ought to execute vengeance on another, except he be the judge, whoſe province it is ſo to do; he alone hath authority to render juſtice ſpeedily, or otherwiſe, as the laws require.

Again,

Again, with reſpect to that which Tully entitleth conſenting, thou ſhouldeſt conſider, whether thou haſt ability to complete that vengeance, which thine own wiſhes deſire, and thy counſellors adviſe: and to this queſtion thou ſhouldeſt anſwer nay; for truly (to ſpeak properly) no men hath ability to do any one act, unleſs he may do it rightfully; and ſurely rightfully no man may take vengeance on his own authority. Thus thou ſeeſt, therefore, that thy ability doth not conſent or accord to thy wiſhes.

Let us next examine the third point, which Tully entitleth the *conſequent*.

Now the conſequent is, the vengeance which thou propoſeſt to take, from which enſueth another vengeance, other wars, and other evils, of which thou art not now aware.

And, as to the fourth point, which Tully entitleth *engendering*—thou ſhouldeſt conſider, that this wrong, which hath been done to thee, hath been engendered of the hate of thine enemies; but that the taking vengeance of this wrong would but engender other vengeance, and would cauſe great waſte of treaſure, and other numberleſs misfortunes.

And now, for the laſt point, which Tully entitleth *cauſes*. Thou ſhalt underſtand, that the wrong, which

which thou haſt received, is termed *oriens* or *efficiens*, and *cauſa longinqua et propinqua*; that is to ſay, the remote cauſe, and the immediate. The remote cauſe is Almighty God, who is the cauſe of all things; the cauſe immediate is thy three enemies; the cauſe accidental was hatred; the cauſe material was the five wounds; the cauſe formal was the manner, to wit, by bringing ladders, and climbing in at a window; the cauſe final was to put thy daughter to death. But, to ſpeak of the cauſe remote, as to what end they ſhall hereafter come, or what ſhall finally betide them, of that I can only form a gueſs and conjecture. It is natural to ſuppoſe, they ſhould come to a bad end; for the Book of decrees ſaith, "Seldom and with difficulty are bad "cauſes brought to a good iſſue."

And now, ſir, ſhouldeſt thou require of me, why God hath permitted men to do thee this injury, to that, in truth, I can give thee no anſwer; for the Apoſtle ſaith, "How unſearchable are his judgments, "and his ways paſt finding out." (Rom. xi. 33.) Nevertheleſs, this I preſume, and believe, that God, who is full of juſtice, and of righteouſneſs, hath ſuffered this injury to be done to thee for ſome good cauſe.

Thy

Thy name is Melibee, that is to ſay, a man that drinketh honey. Thou haſt drunk ſo much of the honey of things temporal, of the riches, the pleaſures, and honours of this world, that thou art drunken, and haſt forgotten Jeſus Chriſt thy creator; thou haſt not paid to him due honour and reverence, nor haſt thou regarded the words of Ovid, which ſay, "Under the honey of the goods of thy body is con-"cealed the venom that ſlayeth the ſoul." And Solomon ſaith, "It is not good to eat much honey." (Prov. xxv. 27.) And peradventure Chriſt hath in deſpight turned away his face from thee, and haſt ſuffered thee to be puniſhed in the ſame degree that thou haſt tranſgreſſed.

Thou haſt ſinned againſt our Lord Chriſt; for ſurely the three enemies of mankind, the fleſh, the world, and the devil, have been by thee wilfully permitted to enter into thine heart, through the windows of thy body; and their aſſaults and temptations have not been ſufficiently guarded againſt and reſiſted; ſo that they have wounded thy ſoul in five places; that is to ſay, by the means of thy five ſenſes ſin hath entered into thy heart. In like manner hath our Lord Chriſt permitted thy three enemies, by the windows

of

of thine houſe, to enter into it, and to wound thy daughter with the five wounds before mentioned.

I ſee well, ſaid Melibeus, that thou endeavoureſt ſtrongly, by thine arguments, to reſtrain my deſire of revenging myſelf on my enemies, by pointing out to me the ill conſequences that may ariſe from it: but if every man were to conſider the perils, and evil conſequences, that might enſue from taking vengeance, it might never be taken at all, which would be productive of great miſchief; for, by the taking of vengeance, the wicked are marked out, and diſtinguiſhed from the good; and many, whoſe will impels them to do evil, are reſtrained from their wicked purpoſes through fear of being puniſhed and chaſtized for their bad deeds.

To this anſwered Dame Prudence, I grant, ſaith ſhe, that taking vengeance is productive of good, as well as of evil; but taking vengeance belongeth not to every one, but to judges only, and ſuch others, as have juriſdiction over offenders. And I further maintain, that, as an individual ſinneth in taking vengeance on another man, ſo doth a judge ſin, if he take not vengeance on him, who hath offended; for Seneca ſaith, "He is a good maſter, who bringeth "the wicked to trial." And Caſſiodore ſaith, "A

"man

"man dreadeth to commit outrages, when he know-
"eth he ſhall diſpleaſe thereby both the judges and
"the king." And another ſaith, "The judge that
"dreadeth to do right, cauſeth men to commit out-
"rages." And St. Paul the Apoſtle ſaith, in his Epiſtle to the Romans, "He beareth not the ſword "in vain; for he is the miniſter of God, a revenger, "to execute wrath upon him, that doeth evil." (Rom. xiii. 4.)

If then thou art deſirous, that thoſe who have injured thee be puniſhed, thou ſhouldeſt appeal to the judge who hath the juriſdiction over them; and he ſhall puniſh them, as the law requireth.

I am now, ſaid Melibeus, quite changed in my ſentiments about taking vengeance. I bethink me well, and recollect, that Fortune hath protected me from my childhood, and hath helped me ſafely through many a great ſtrait. I will now truſt myſelf again to her, not doubting, by God's grace, but ſhe will aſſiſt me to revenge my wrongs.

Indeed, ſaid Prudence, if thou wilt take my counſel, thou ſhouldeſt not pay reſpect to Fortune at all; for Seneca ſaith, "Things that are done unwiſely, "and depending upon Fortune, ſhall come to no "good end." And the ſame writer ſaith, "The

"more

"more clear and the more ſhining Fortune is, the "more brittle is ſhe, and the ſooner broken." Truſt not in her, for ſhe is not ſtedfaſt nor ſtable; for when thou thinkeſt thyſelf the moſt certain of her aſſiſtance, ſhe will fail and deceive thee. And whereas thou ſayeſt, that Fortune hath protected thee from thy childhood, I think thou ſhouldeſt, for that reaſon, put the leſs truſt in her; for Seneca ſaith, "The man, who is much favoured by Fortune, is "made a fool by her."

Now then, ſince thou art deſirous to have vengeance, and yet approveſt not of that, which the laws award, and the judge pronounceth; and ſince that, which is left to the guidance of Fortune, is perilous and uncertain; then haſt thou none other remedy, than to have recourſe to that Sovereign Lord and Judge, who avengeth all wrongs, and who hath himſelf declared, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, "ſaith the Lord." (Rom. xii. 19.)

To this Melibeus anſwered, If I do not revenge the injuries men do to me, I do but invite, not only them, but all others, to do me ſtill more; for it is written, "if thou take no vengeance of an old wrong, "thou doſt but invite thine enemy to commit a freſh "one." And by ſuch patience men would repeat their outrages,

outrages, till I ſhould not be able to ſuſtain them, and they would hold me moreover in utter contempt; for ſome men ſay, "by much patience injuries ſhall "fall ſo thick upon thee, that thou ſhalt not be able to "endure them."

It is true, ſaith Prudence, that too great a degree of patience is productive of ill; but it does not therefore follow, that every perſon who is injured is to take vengeance himſelf, for that belongeth to the judges only, whoſe duty it is to puniſh wrongs; and, therefore, the two authorities thou haſt before quoted, are to be underſtood only of judges, who, if they ſuffer by too great lenity crimes to go unpuniſhed, they not only invite, but command men to commit them. So a wiſe man hath ſaid, "The judge that "correcteth not the ſinner, commandeth, and biddeth "him to ſin." And judges and ſovereigns might ſo long ſuffer offenders to eſcape puniſhment, that, in length of time, they might become ſo daring and powerful, as to turn them out of their places, and deſtroy their whole authority.

But we will ſuppoſe, that it were lawful for thee to revenge thine own wrongs; I ſay thou haſt it not in thy power to effect it; for, if thou wilt compare thy ſtrength with that of thine adverſaries, thou ſhalt find

find that thou art in many reſpects in weaker condition than they; and that is another reaſon, why, at preſent, thou ſhouldeſt be patient.

Thou knoweſt, moreover, that it is a common ſaying, "It is madneſs to ſtrive with a man, who is "ſtronger than thyſelf:" and to ſtrive with one of equal ſtrength, is an affair of great peril; and with one whoſe ſtrength is inferior, is folly; and, therefore, ſhould a man, as much as he is able, avoid contending at all; for Solomon ſaith, "It is an honour to a "man to ceaſe from ſtrife." (Prov. xx. 3.) And, if it chance, that a ſtronger man than thou do thee ſome injury, be anxious rather to remedy, than to avenge it; for Seneca ſaith, "He putteth himſelf in "great peril, that ſtriveth with one who is mightier "than himſelf." And Cato ſaith,

Cede locum læſus, fortunæ cede potentis,
Lædere qui potuit, prodeſſe aliquando valebit.
L. iv. Diſ. 40.

"Give way when thou art injured, and yield to "him, who hath now been able to hurt thee; "for at another time, perhaps, he may be as "willing to do thee ſervice."

Yet, ſuppoſe further, that ye, both of you, had the power, as well as the liberty, to take revenge, ſtill

there are many reaſons, that ſhould reſtrain you from doing ſo, and ſhould incline you rather to put up with the injuries that have been done to you. Firſt, thou ſhouldeſt have conſideration of thine own ſins and offences, for which God hath ſuffered theſe wrongs to fall upon thee; for the poet ſaith, "We ought patiently to endure the grievances we "ſuffer, when we conſider that we have deſerved "them." And St. Gregory ſaith, "When a man "conſidereth well the number of his ſins, the afflic- "tions, which befal him, ſeem the leſs heavy; and "inaſmuch as he thinketh his ſins the more grievous, "inſomuch do his ſufferings appear the eaſier and "the lighter." Thou oughteſt, moreover, to bend thine heart to take upon it the patience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; as St. Peter ſaith, "Chriſt alſo ſuf- "fered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould "follow his ſteps, who did no ſin, neither was "guile found in his mouth; who, when he was re- "viled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he "threatened not; but committed himſelf to him that "judgeth righteouſly." (1 Peter ii. 21, 22, 23.)

And the great examples of patience, which the ſaints, now in heaven, exhibited amid their ſufferings, which were great and undeſerved, ought to ſtir up in thee

thee the like mind. Thou ſhouldeſt encourage thyſelf in patience alſo, by this conſideration, that the tribulations of this world endure but for a while; but the joy obtained, by being patient in tribulation, is permanent and laſting.

And of this be thou well aſſured, that he hath been ill diſciplined, and ill inſtructed, who is averſe to become patient; for Solomon ſaith, "The diſ-"cretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his "glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion." (Prov. xix. 11.) And again, "Better it is to be of an humble "ſpirit with the lowly, than to divide the ſpoil with "the proud." (Prov. xvi. 19.) He ſaith alſo, "A wrathful man ſtirreth up ſtrife, but he that is "ſlow to anger appeaſeth ſtrife." (Prov. xv. 18.) And again, "He that is ſlow to anger is better than "the mighty; and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than he "that taketh a city." (Prov. xvi. 32.) And St. James ſaith, "Be patient, therefore, brethren—And "behold, we count them happy, which endure." (James v. 7. 11.)

I grant you, ſaid Melibeus, that patience is a virtue of high perfection: but every man may not attain to the perfection ye require. That I have not attained it, I truly confeſs; for my heart cannot reſt

till I have avenged my wrongs. And, if mine enemies, when they committed these outrages againſt me, were regardleſs of danger, and thereby executed their atrocious deſigns, men ought not to blame me, if I face the ſame danger to revenge one attack by another.

Ah! ſaid Dame Prudence, thou ſpeakeſt now as thy will prompts thee; but in no caſe whatever may a man commit an outrage to gratify his revenge; for Caſſodorus ſaith, "His offence is as great who "committeth violence to revenge himſelf, as he who "was guilty of the firſt outrage." And therefore your revenge ſhould be obtained by the law, and not by violence.

And if ye revenge the wrongs done you by your enemies in any other manner than the laws allow, ye are guilty of ſin. And therefore ſaith Seneca, "A man may not revenge one wickedneſs by ano-"ther."

If ye ſay that it be lawful to reſiſt force by force, ye ſay true, provided the reſiſtance be immediate; for then it is not revenge, but ſelf-defence: but in that ſelf-defence it behoveth a man to keep himſelf within bounds, and not to proceed to unneceſſary extremities. In the caſe we are now conſidering, thou knoweſt

knoweſt that thou makeſt no plea of ſelf-defence, but merely of revenge; and therefore thou proveſt that thou haſt no deſire to act with temper. It is for that reaſon, I am ſo deſirous to recommend unto thee patience; for Solomon ſaith, "He that is ſoon angry, "dealeth fooliſhly." (Prov. xiv. 17.)

I grant, ſaid Melibeus, that when a man feeleth himſelf touched with that, which doth not belong to him, it is no wonder that he ſuffer; for the Law ſaith, "He is culpable, who meddleth with that, "which doth not concern him." And Solomon ſaith, "He, that meddleth with ſtrife, that belongeth "not to him, is like one, that taketh a dog by the "ears." (Prov. xxvi. 17.) For, as he, that taketh the dog by the ears, is bitten by him, ſo doth he, that meddleth with the ſtrife of another, fall into miſchief.

But thou knoweſt well, that this grievance, about which we are now debating, toucheth me too nearly; and, therefore, there can be no wonder, if I be impatient, and in wrath; nor do I ſee cauſe to dread the conſequences, were I to ſatisfy my revenge; ſince I am both richer and more powerful than mine enemies; and thou well knoweſt, that by money and great poſſeſſions the things of this world are chiefly

governed. And Solomon ſaith, "Wealth maketh "many friends." (Prov. xix. 4.)

When Prudence heard her huſband boaſt ſo much of his riches, and ſo much undervalue the power of his adverſaries, ſhe thus replied to him: I grant, ſaid ſhe, my dear huſband, that thou art rich and mighty; and that riches are a great bleſſing to thoſe, who have acquired them honeſtly, and uſed them fitly; for as the human body may not be ſuſtained without food and nouriſhment, ſo may not a man proſper without temporal good things; and, by means of them, he may acquire great and potent friends; and therefore ſaith Pamphilus, "A neatherd's daugh- "ter, if ſhe be rich, may chooſe a huſband where "ſhe will; for not one man in a thouſand will re- "fuſe her." And this Pamphilus ſaith alſo, "If "thou be happy," or in other words, "if thou be "rich, thou ſhalt find a great number of friends "and companions: but, if thou become poor, fare- "well fellowſhip and friendſhip!" He ſaith more- over, that "thoſe, who are born baſe, and of "low degree, are ennobled by riches." And, as by riches many good things are procured, ſo do many evils proceed from poverty; for great need con- ſtraineth a man to do many bad things; and there- fore

fore is Poverty called by Caſſiodorus, the mother of ruin. And therefore Piers Alphonſe ſaith, "One "of the greateſt evils, that can happen in this "world, is, when a man of a free and generous "ſpirit is conſtrained, through poverty, to accept "of alms from his enemy." And Innocent ſaith, "Sorrowful and unhappy is the condition of a poor "beggar; for, if he aſk not for meat, he dieth for "hunger; and if he aſk it, he dieth for ſhame; and "yet neceſſity forceth him to aſk it." And therefore ſaith the ſon of Sirach, "Better it is to die than "to beg." (Ecclus. xl. 28.)

For theſe reaſons, which I have given thee, and for many other, which I could give thee, I grant that riches are great bleſſings to thoſe, who acquire them honeſtly, and who uſe them fitly; and therefore I will ſhew thee, how thou ſhouldeſt conduct thyſelf; firſt in the acquiring them, and then in the making uſe of them.

Firſt, thou ſhouldeſt acquire them without great eagerneſs, and not too rapidly, or in too ſhort a time; for a man, that is eager to obtain great riches, abandoneth himſelf frequently to every ſpecies of diſhoneſty; and therefore ſaith Solomon, "He that "haſteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and conſider-

"eth not, that poverty ſhall come upon him." (Prov. xxviii. 22.)

And thou oughteſt to get riches by thine ingenuity and labour, but without doing wrong to any one; for the Law ſaith, "No man becometh rich by in-"juring another;" that is to ſay, the law of nature forbiddeth ſuch conduct. And Tully ſaith, "No "ſorrow, nor dread of death, nor any thing, that "may befal a man, is ſo much againſt nature, as a "man to derive his own benefit from the wrongs he "doth to another." And though the great men, and the mighty, obtain riches more eaſily than thou, yet ſhouldeſt thou be induſtrious to gather what thou canſt; for idleneſs is to be avoided above all things; for Solomon ſaith, "Slothfulneſs caſteth into a deep "ſleep, and an idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger." (Prov. xix. 15.) And again, "He that tilleth his "land, ſhall have plenty of bread." (Prov. xxviii. 19.)

For he, that is given to idleneſs, can never find a fit time to work for his own benefit; for, as a poet ſaith, "The idle man excuſeth himſelf in winter, "becauſe it is too cold, and in ſummer, becauſe of the "great heat;" for theſe reaſons, ſaith Cato, "Awake, "and incline thyſelf not over much to ſleep; for too "much reſt is the cauſe of many vices." And therefore,

therefore, ſaith St. Jerom, "Exerciſe thyſelf in good "deeds, that the Devil, who is our enemy, may not "find thee unemployed; for he doth not readily ap- "ply himſelf to thoſe, whom he findeth occupied in "good works."

Thus then, in getting riches, thou muſt avoid idleneſs, and, when thou haſt acquired them by thine ingenuity and labour, thou ſhouldeſt uſe them in ſuch a manner, that men may not ſay, thou art too prodigal, or too ſparing; for as an avaricious man is cenſured on account of his covetouſneſs, ſo is he alſo, who is too profuſe; for Cato ſaith, "Uſe the riches "thou haſt got, in ſuch a manner, that thou be not "called either a prodigal, or a miſer; for it is a "ſhame to a man to have a poor heart, and a rich "purſe." He ſaith alſo, "The goods, thou haſt "gotten, uſe in moderation; for they, who idly "waſte what they have, when their own is gone, "make free with what is another's." I ſay therefore, that thou ſhouldeſt avoid avarice, uſing thy riches ſo, that men may not ſay thou haſt buried them, but that they are ready at command, when occaſion calls for them. For it is thus, that a wiſe man reproveth the miſer. Why do men by their avarice bury their riches in the earth, when they know they muſt die,

and

and leave them? And for what cauſe do they attach themſelves ſo inſeparably to their treaſures, when they know, or ought to know, that when they leave this world, they can carry nothing with them? And therefore, ſaith St. Auguſtine, "The avaricious man "is likened unto hell, which, the more it ſwalloweth, "the more deſire hath it to ſwallow and devour." Yet in the ſame degree as thou art deſirous not to be eſteemed covetous, in the ſame ſhouldeſt thou be anxious not to be deemed prodigal; therefore, ſaith Tully, "The goods of thine houſe ſhould not be "kept ſo cloſe, but that they may be ready, at the "ſuggeſtions of thine own benevolence, to ſupply "the neceſſities of others; neither ſhould they be ſo "open, as to be the property of every one."

But, both in the acquiring of riches, as well as in the uſing of them, thou ſhouldeſt have three things in thy heart, our Lord God, conſcience, and a good name.

Firſt, thou ſhouldeſt have our Lord God in thy heart; and for no riches whatever ſhouldeſt thou do a thing, which may, in any manner, offend thy great Creator; for, after the word of Solomon, "Better "is little with the fear of the Lord, than great trea-"ſure and trouble therewith." (Prov. xv. 16.)

And

And yet I ſay, nevertheleſs, that thou ſhouldeſt be as induſtrious, as thou art able, to get riches, provided thou get them with a good conſcience; and the Apoſtle ſaith, "For our rejoicing is this, the "teſtimony of our conſcience." (2 Corinth. i. 12.) And the wiſe man ſaith, "The ſubſtance of a man "is good, and full, when ſin is not in his con-"ſcience."

Afterwards, both in the acquiring, as well as in the uſing of thy riches, thou ſhouldeſt do thy diligence to preſerve a good name; for Solomon ſaith, "A "good name is rather to be choſen than great riches." (Prov. xxii. 1.)

And, ſurely, he deſerveth not the name of gentleman, who doth not, by obeying God and his conſcience, preſerve alſo a good name; and Caſſiodore ſaith, "That it is a ſign of a gentle heart, when a "man is deſirous to have a good reputation;" and therefore, ſaith St. Auguſtine, "There are two "things, that are right needful, a good conſci-"ence, and a good character; and he that truſteth ſo "much in his good conſcience, as to deſpiſe and ſet "at nought the eſtimation he is held in, diſplays but "a low ſpirit."

Now

Now have I ſhewed thee, how thou ſhouldeſt demean thyſelf in the getting of riches, and in what manner thou ſhouldeſt uſe them; and yet I ſee, from the confidence thou putteſt in them, that thou wouldeſt willingly proceed to violence. But it is my advice, that thou commence not war in confidence of thy riches, for they are inſufficient to carry it on; and therefore, ſaith a Philoſopher, "That man, who "is fond of war, can never poſſeſs riches equal to "his wants; for the richer he is, the greater ſums "muſt he expend, if he would enſure honour and "victory." And Solomon ſaith, "Riches make "themſelves wings, they flee away, as an eagle, "towards heaven." (Prov. xxiii. 5.)

And, my beloved lord, though by your riches you might command many men, yet it is not wiſe to begin war, when peace may be obtained both to your honour and advantage; for the ſucceſs of battles depends not on the numbers in the field, nor the courage of the warriors, but is in the hand of the Almighty Diſpoſer of events; and therefore Judas Maccabeus, when he went to fight againſt his adverſaries, whoſe numbers were greater and ſtronger than his own, comforted his little army with theſe reflections: "It is in the power," ſaid he, "of the Almighty,

"to

" to give the victory to the few, as eaſily as to the " many; for victory cometh not from the multitude " of the people, but from the God of heaven."

And therefore, my dear lord, as no man is certain that he is worthy that God ſhould grant him the victory (for Solomon ſaith, " The beginning of " ſtrife is as when one letteth out water"); therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with. (Prov. xvii. 14.) For in war there are great perils, and a great man is as ſoon ſlain as a ſmall one. This the events recorded in the ſecond Book of Kings teſtify. And ſince the perils of war are ſo great, a man ſhould avoid it as much as poſſible.

When Dame Prudence had ſpoken, Melibeus thus anſwered: I ſee well, Dame Prudence, by your reaſons and arguments, that you are utterly averſe to war; but you have not given me your advice, what other conduct to purſue.

My advice, ſhe replied, is, that you accord with your adverſaries, and that you be at peace with them; for it is ſaid, " by concord and harmony ſmall things " increaſe, by diſcord the greateſt are brought to " nothing;" and our Lord ſaith, " Bleſſed are the " peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the children " of God." (Matthew v. 9.) And you know well, that

that one of the greateſt duties of this life is peace and unity.

Ah! ſaid Melibeus, I now ſee plainly, that thou payeſt no regard to my dignity and my honour. For thou knoweſt well, that mine adverſaries have brought on this contention, by being the firſt to commit outrage, neither do they ſue for peace, nor are deſirous to be reconciled. Wouldeſt thou then, that I go, and implore forgiveneſs of them? That were not for mine honour; for as too great homelineſs inſpireth contempt, ſo doth alſo too great humility.

Then began Dame Prudence to make ſhew of being in wrath, and ſaid, In truth, ſir, though you deny it, your honour and proſperity is as dear to me, as mine own; and that it has been ever ſo, yourſelf, till this moment, have never contradicted. And, had I ſaid, that you ought to have ſued for peace and reconciliation, I ſhould not have ſaid wrong; for the wiſe man ſaith, "The diſſenſion "beginneth by another, but the reconciliation be-"ginneth by thyſelf." And the Apoſtle ſaith, "Eſchew evil and do good, ſeek peace and en-"ſue it." (1 Peter iii. 11.)

Yet

Yet I ſay not, that thou ſhouldeſt rather ſue to thine adverſaries for peace and reconciliation, than they to thee; for I know well, that thou art ſo hard-hearted that thou wilt do nothing that I adviſe. And Solomon ſaith, "He that hardeneth his heart, "ſhall fall into miſchief." (Prov. xxviii. 14.)

When Melibeus had heard Dame Prudence make ſhew of being in wrath, he thus ſaid to her: I pray you, Dame, be not diſpleaſed at what I ſay; for I know well, that I am in anger; and it is no wonder that they who are in anger know not what they ſay or do; therefore it is ſaid, "The troubled eye ſeeth "not clear."

But ſay, and counſel me, as you think beſt; for I am ready to do whatever you deſire; and the more you tell me of my folly, the more I think you love me, and the kinder you are to me; for Solomon ſaith, "Open rebuke is better than ſecret love; "faithful are the words of a friend, but the kiſſes of "an enemy are deceitful." (Prov. xxvii. 5, 6.)

Then ſaid Dame Prudence, I do not make ſhew of anger, but in order to do you ſervice; for Solomon ſaith, "Anſwer not a fool according to his "folly." (Prov. xxvi. 4.)

Then

Then ſaid Melibeus, I ſhall not ſtrive to argue againſt the many good reaſons you have produced; but give me your counſel in a few words, and I am ready to purſue it.

Then Dame Prudence freely opened her mind to him; and above all things, ſhe ſaid, I counſel you to make your peace with God; for, as I have ſaid to you before, God, on account of your ſins, hath ſuffered theſe outrages to be done to you; and, if you do as I ſay, God will ſend your adverſaries unto you, and make them fall at your feet in token of obedience to you; for Solomon ſaith, "When a man's "ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be "at peace with him." (Prov. xvi. 7.)

And, I pray you, let me ſpeak with your adverſaries in private, ſo that they may not know it be done with your conſent; and when I ſhall have diſcovered their thoughts and intentions, I may be able to counſel you the more ſecurely.

Dame, ſaid Melibeus, uſe your own diſcretion, for I put myſelf wholly under your guidance and direction.

Then Dame Prudence, when ſhe ſaw the good diſpoſition of her huſband, deliberated with herſelf, how

how ſhe might bring the affair to a good iſſue; and, when ſhe ſaw a fit occaſion, ſhe ſent to theſe adverſaries to come to her in private, and ſhewed wiſely unto them the great advantages and bleſſings of peace, and the great evils and perils that ariſe from contention; and in a mild manner repreſented to them the neceſſity of their repentance, for the great injuries they had done to her huſband Melibeus, her daughter, and herſelf.

And, when they had heard the goodly words of Dame Prudence, they were ſurpriſed and delighted with her. Ah, lady! ſaid they, you have ſhewed to us the bleſſing of peace, after the ſaying of the prophet David: and reconciliation, which we are not worthy of, and which we ought to ſue for with contrition and humility, you yourſelf of your great goodneſs have offered unto us. Now ſee we well that the wiſdom of Solomon is true; for he ſaith, "A "ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath." (Prov. xv. 1.)

Moſt readily, they ſaid, we refer the matter to you, and are willing to do whatever my lord Melibeus ſhall command us. And therefore, dear and kind lady, we pray and beſeech you with all humility, that you will, in your great goodneſs, fulfil in deed, what you have ſo kindly adviſed; for we are truly ſenſible,

that we have injured my lord Melibeus above meaſure, and that we have no power to make him amends; and therefore we are willing to bind ourſelves and our friends, to do what he ſhall command. But, peradventure, ſo great is his wrath and reſentment for the injuries we have done him, that he will enjoin us ſuch a penance, as we may not be able to ſuſtain; and therefore, noble lady, we reſort to the compaſſion of your truly feminine heart, that you will take ſuch ſteps, that our offences, though great, may not bring ourſelves and our friends to total ruin and deſtruction.

It is certainly, ſaid Prudence, a hard and perilous thing for a man to ſubmit himſelf entirely to the arbitration of his enemy; for the ſon of Sirach ſaith, "Hear me, O ye great men of the people, and "hearken with your ears, ye rulers of the congre-"gation. Give not thy wife, thy brother and friend "power over thee while thou liveſt." (Ecclus. xxxiii. 18, 19.)

Now ſince he forbiddeth a man to reſign the right over his perſon either to a brother or a friend, he forbiddeth him, of courſe, by a much ſtronger reaſon, to reſign it to an enemy; and though I counſel you, that ye do not diſtruſt my dear lord (becauſe I know him

him to be gentle, generous and courteous, and, leaſt of all, greedy of money; for he is deſirous of nothing but due honour and reſpect); yet I know well, that, in this affair, he will be guided by my counſel; and I doubt not, by God's grace, but that I ſhall effect between you a thorough reconciliation.

To this they with one voice replied, We reſign, O kindeſt lady, both ourſelves and fortunes to your diſpoſal, and are ready to come, on the day you will pleaſe to fix, to give you the fulleſt ſecurity for our ſubmitting ourſelves to the commands of my lord Melibeus.

When Dame Prudence had heard their anſwer, ſhe bade them privately depart; and returning to her lord, ſhe told him how full of ſorrow and repentance ſhe had found his adverſaries, acknowledging with great humility the injuries they had committed, ready to ſubmit to the ſentence he ſhould pronounce on them; but imploring at the ſame time his mercy and compaſſion.

Then ſaid Melibeus, He is worthy of forgiveneſs, that excuſeth not his ill deeds, but, acknowledging them, and repenting of them, ſues for pardon and indulgence; for Seneca ſaith, "Where confeſſion is, "there is remiſſion and forgiveneſs, for confeſſion is

"neighbour to innocence;" and therefore, as to my own part, I aſſent to peace; but it is good that we do nothing without the counſel of our friends.

Then was Prudence right glad, and ſaid, Surely, ſir, you have well and wiſely anſwered; for as by the counſels of your friends you were ſtirred up to revenge, therefore ſhould you not make peace without their accord; for the Law ſaith, "There is nothing "juſter, than that by the ſame powers, by which de- "crees were enacted, by the ſame ſhould they be re- "pealed."

Then, without delay, Prudence aſſembled her kindred and her old friends, that were faithful and diſcreet, and told them, in the preſence of Melibeus, the whole circumſtances of the caſe, as have been above deſcribed, and requeſted them to give their advice, what it were beſt to do. And, when they had conſidered the matter with great care and deliberation, and had fully and diligently weighed it in all points, they were unanimous for peace; and adviſed, that Melibeus ſhould cordially receive thoſe, who had done him theſe injuries, to his favour and forgiveneſs.

When Dame Prudence heard not only her lord, but his friends alſo, aſſent to her opinions, her heart rejoiced

rejoiced gladly, and ſhe ſaid, Thus ſpeaketh the old proverb, "The good that thou canſt do to-day, do "it forthwith, and delay it not till to-morrow." And it is therefore my advice, that you immediately ſend meſſengers, ſuch as are diſcreet and wiſe, unto your adverſaries, telling them that, if they would treat of peace, they ſhould come to us without delay. This was put in execution ſpeedily. And when theſe treſpaſſers, who had now repented of their ill deeds, received the meſſage, they were much pleaſed, and, returning a mild and modeſt anſwer, expreſſed their thanks to Melibeus, and his aſſembled friends, and prepared without delay to attend the meſſengers.

In their way towards the palace of Melibeus, they collected ſome choſen friends to be their ſureties; and when they were come into his preſence, he thus ſpoke to them: Ye know well, that ye have, without cauſe, committed great injuries againſt me, my wife Prudence, and my daughter; for ye have entered my houſe by violence, and have done ſuch outrages, as all men know are deſerving of death; and therefore, I here demand of you, whether ye be willing to ſubmit the puniſhment for your offences to the ſentence myſelf and my wife ſhall pronounce on you.

Then the wiſeſt of the three anſwered for himſelf and fellows: Sir, ſaid he, we know well, that we are unworthy to preſent ourſelves in the preſence of ſo great a lord, whom we are conſcious we have ſo highly and ſo unjuſtly offended: but, relying on that goodneſs and benevolence of character, to which all the world beareth witneſs, we are ready to yield ourſelves to your diſpoſal, beſeeching you, of your great kindneſs, to conſider the ſincerity of our repentance, and to grant us forgiveneſs for the great outrages we have committed; for we well know, that the forgiving ſweetneſs of your pity exceeds even the atrocious vileneſs of our guilt.

Then Melibeus, with great benignity, raiſed them from the ground; and, having received the bonds and obligations both of themſelves and their ſureties, and their oaths alſo, by which they bound themſelves to ſubmit to his ſentence, he aſſigned them a certain day, on which they ſhould return, and receive judgment for their offences. Theſe things being done, they returned to their own homes.

And when Dame Prudence ſaw a fit occaſion, ſhe aſked her lord Melibeus, what puniſhment he would inflict upon them. To which Melibeus anſwered,

It

It is my deſign to make them forfeit all their goods and poſſeſſions, and to baniſh them for ever.

Surely, ſaid Prudence, this is a cruel ſentence, and much againſt reaſon; for you have riches enough of your own, and need not the goods of others; and thereby you may get the name of a covetous and rapacious man, which ought ever to be avoided; for, according to the ſaying of the Apoſtle, "The love "of money is the root of all evil." (1 Timothy vi. 10.) And therefore it were better for you, to loſe part of your own ſubſtance, than, for ſuch a cauſe, to rob them of theirs; for better it is to loſe with credit, than to gain with reproach; and it is the duty of every man to do his diligence to get him a good name; nor ſhall he be only anxious to preſerve it, when he hath gotten it, but ſhall perſiſt alſo in doing ſtill more and more good, to brighten and renew it; for it is written, that "the good name, that once was, but "is not renewed, ſoon paſſeth away."

And, touching what you ſay, that you will drive theſe offenders into exile—I think ſuch puniſhment is far out of meaſure, conſidering the manner in which they have ſubmitted themſelves to you. And it is written, that "He is worthy to loſe his privilege, that "miſuſeth the power and the authority that is given

"him." And, ſuppoſe you might by law ſentence them to that puniſhment (though I firmly believe you have no ſuch authority), perhaps you might not be able to put it into execution, and then matters would return to the ſame contention as before; and therefore, if you expect men to pay reſpect to you, you muſt be more lenient in your ſentences and judgments; for it is written, "Him, that com-"mandeth moſt courteouſly, men moſt readily obey." And I, therefore, beg you, that you will in this inſtance over-rule your paſſions; for Seneca ſaith, "He "that overcometh his heart, getteth twice the vic-"tory." And Tully ſaith, "There is nothing ſo "commendable in a great man, as to be mild and "gentle, and eaſily appeaſed." And I pray you, in the puniſhments you are about to inflict on theſe offenders, that you do it with ſuch forbearance, as may preſerve your good name; that men may have cauſe to praiſe you, for the tenderneſs of your pity; and that yourſelf may have no cauſe to repent of what you have done; for Seneca ſaith, "He over-"cometh in an evil manner, that repenteth of his "victory." Wherefore I beſeech you, let mercy be in your heart, to the intent that God Almighty may at the laſt judgment have mercy upon you; for St.

James

James ſaith, "He ſhall have judgment without "mercy, that ſheweth no mercy." (James ii. 13.)

When Melibeus had heard the ſtrong reaſons of Dame Prudence, and her wiſe inſtructions, his heart began to incline to her opinion; and weighing well her good deſigns, he at length brought himſelf to aſſent fully and entirely to her counſels; and he thanked God, from whom proceedeth all goodneſs and all virtue, for that he had given him a wife of ſuch great diſcretion. And when the day came, when his adverſaries ſhould appear before him, he ſpoke to them in theſe words: Although of your folly and high preſumption ye have grievouſly offended me, yet as I now ſee the great humility and contrition of your hearts, I am thereby inclined to do you grace and mercy; wherefore I receive you again into my favour, and forgive heartily the offences ye have committed againſt me and thoſe who are dear to me; hoping that in like manner the God of all mercies will forgive us our offences at the hour of our death; for, doubtleſs, if we be ſorry and repent truly of our ſins, our Lord God is a God of mercy, and will forgive us our treſpaſſes, and will at length bring us to that bliſs which ſhall never have an end. Amen.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO

THE MONK'S TALE.

OUR joyous Hoſt, when ended was the tale,
" Rather," he ſaid, " than a good butt of ale,
" Would I, that my dear wife this tale ſhould hear
" (If haply ſhe would lend a patient ear):
" For (truth to ſay), ſomewhat too prone to ſtrive,
" She's much unlike good Melibeus' wife.
" Thus when, with rage o'ercome, I beat my knaves,
" Inſtant ſhe brings me more and heavier ſtaves;
" And cries, O raſcals, ſlay them every one,
" Nor leave among them one unbroken bone!
" And if in church, by bow ſubmiſs and low,
" Honour to her a neighbour ſhould not ſhew;
" Or if, for want of manners quite correct,
" Should ſhew, good heavens! ſome actual diſreſpect;
" Soon as ſhe home returns, the ſtorm begins,
" And my poor ears are ſtunn'd for others' ſins.
" O heartleſs

" O heartleſs coward! wild with rage, ſhe cries,
" Whoſe daſtard ſpirit will not vengeful riſe,
" When thy poor wife bears ſuch indignities!
" A man art thou? creation's mighty lord?
" No! take my diſtaff, and give me thy ſword!
" Then forth again ſhe breaks, O luckleſs fate,
" To wed a paltry, daſtard, milkſop mate!
" Who, though inſulted by each coxcomb wight,
" Dares not aſſert an injur'd ſpouſe's right.—
" Theſe are her taunts, if to her numerous foes
" I do not, when ſhe bids, my life expoſe;
" And much I fear, on an unlucky day,
" Some friend or neighbour ſhe will make me ſlay;
" For I am perilous with knife in hand,
" Though her, I own, I never dare withſtand.
" Hapleſs is he, who 'gainſt her will perſiſt;
" For, ah! what man's ſo ſtout that may reſiſt
" The active vengeance of her brawny fiſt?
" But we'll of this no more—with ſome good tale
" My lord the Monk ſhall next our ears regale.
" Lo! Rocheſter's fair ſpire appears in view!
" Quick then, my lord, and give us ſomething new.
" My lord I call you, for, I ſpeak with ſhame,
" To me's unknown your reverence' proper name.

" Will

" Will you Dan John be call'd? or do you chooſe
" That I the nobler name Dan Pedro uſe?
" Say whence thou'rt ſprung? of noble lineage born,
" Do birth and anceſtry thy name adorn?
" For by the freedom of thy portly mien,
" And thy ſkin's ſleekneſs, it may well be ſeen,
" That, where thou go'ſt, the paſture's rich and green.
" And in thy convent high in office plac'd,
" With formal pomp and proper titles grac'd,
" Thee there await, I ween, obſequious hands,
" Prepar'd to execute thy dread commands.
" No novice raw, or puny cloiſterer thou,
" Starv'd by obſervance of thy holy vow;
" But, fed in plenty's lap, thy ſtrength's confeſt,
" By thy large bones, and broad and brawny cheſt.
" Shame on the wretch! whoſe weak and abject mind
" To a cold barren cell ſuch powers confin'd!
" For who's than thee more fitted to fulfil
" (Didſt thou but dare) thine own and Heaven's high will?
" Soon, like a Patriarch, ſmiling ſhould'ſt thou ſee
" Innumerous ſhoots bloom round the parent tree.

" Men,

" Men, were I Pope, ſhould lead a different life,
" And each ſhorn luſty monk ſhould have his wife:
" For now Heav'n's beſt deſigns are ſadly croſs'd,
" And a monk's life is but *Love's Labour loſt*:
" Hence laymen, now a puny ſtunted race,
" Religion's portly ſons ne'er dare to face,
" Unable grown, poor weak, unfruitful elves,
" T' extend the chain of being paſt themſelves:
" Their wives, of hateful barrenneſs afraid,
" Are driven to call the prieſthood to their aid.
" Be not in wrath, my lord, at what I ſay;
" Full many a wholeſome truth is ſpoke in play."
The Monk with patience all his banter took,
And thus in true good humour briefly ſpoke:
" Freely a tale I'll tell; or is your ear
" Pleas'd good St. Edward's great exploits to hear?
" Or I'll recite, if this you rather chooſe,
" Th' impaſſion'd labours of the tragic muſe.
" Hers is the taſk to paint th' unequal ſtriſe,
" The ſad viciſſitudes of human life:
" Now the fall'n hero's unexampled woes
" She tells indignant in unfetter'd proſe,
" Her glowing rage now nobler pours along
" In the warm numbers of immortal ſong.

" But

" But if, my worthy friends, when I relate
" The Hero's fall, or captive Monarch's fate,
" I haply ſhould invent the well-known tale,
" Or in exactneſs of the dates ſhould fail,
" Blame not my zeal; for this, I hope, 's confeſs'd,
" That, to deſerve your praiſe, I'll do my beſt."

THE

THE MONK'S TALE.

NOW then attend, and I of thoſe will tell,
Who from the heights of envied greatneſs fell,
Doom'd life's ſevereſt ſcourges to endure,
To fall from bliſs, and never hope a cure!
For ah! when fortune turns, what human force
May ſtay the progreſs of her wayward courſe?
May theſe examples curb o'erweening pride!
And may none hence in her falſe ſmiles confide!

LUCIFER.

With the firſt victim of preſumptuous ſin,
Immortal Lucifer, my tales begin.
An angel form'd, from Heaven's high bliſs he fell
Down to the regions dark of yawning hell;
There doom'd to expiate his rebellious crime
To the laſt moment of unceaſing time.

ADAM.

Adam, by God's own hand divinely made,
Roam'd unreſtrain'd in Eden's bliſsful ſhade;
To his free uſe all-kind and bounteous Heaven,
One tree except, each lovely fruit had given;

And

And there in joy ſupreme he long remain'd,
Till ſin's rank poiſon all his ſoul had ſtain'd:
Then (ah! too juſtly) was he doom'd to know
The ſad dire portion of increaſing woe.

SAMPSON.

Lo! Manoah's ſon! whoſe fame fill'd wide the earth,
Promis'd by Heav'n's own angel ere his birth!
Favour'd by God, he all in ſtrength ſurpaſs'd,
Till, oft entreated, he betray'd at laſt
The mighty ſecret, where his proweſs lay,
And to his folly fell too ſoon the prey.
A roaring lion once unarm'd he ſlew,
And his rent carcaſe to the winds he threw:
While his breaſt ſwell'd with wild vindictive pride
For various wrongs, but chief his wife denied,
Three hundred foxes quick in rage he caught,
And to his father's yellow corn-fields brought;
Then to the tail of each his fearleſs hand
Tied, his revenge to glut, a flaming brand;
And mid the corn he drove each frighted beaſt,
Pleas'd with the ravage his fierce eyes to feaſt.
A thouſand fell, ſlain by his hand alone,
While his ſole weapon was an aſs's bone;
And when with ſlaughter tir'd, for raging thirſt
His ſwoln and throbbing veins well nigh had burſt.

Fervent

Fervent to Heav'n's Almighty Power he pray'd,
To ſend refreſhing moiſture to his aid;
When from a wondrous tooth, that erſt had grown
Fix'd in the ſocket of the ſlaughtering bone,
Sudden there iſſued (new and ſtrange to tell)
A copious ſtream, as from a ſpringing well:
With this the mighty man his thirſt allay'd,
As in the book of Judges is diſplay'd.
The gates of Gaza from the walls he tore,
And to a hill on his huge ſhoulders bore.
O Sampſon! Sampſon! had not woman's art
Work'd on the ſoftneſs of thy yielding heart,
Th' united ſtrength of thouſands would have fail'd,
And thine own arm againſt an hoſt prevail'd.
In manly temperance' hardy ſchool he grew,
And wine's inſidious joys he never knew:
His unſhorn ringlets his fair forehead grac'd,
And (ſo will'd Heaven) in theſe his ſtrength was plac'd.
Short was, alas! the triumph he enjoy'd,
For female wiles too ſoon his ſtrength deſtroy'd;
To the falſe Dalila he weakly told
Th' important ſecret, who her lover ſold
To his fierce foes; and, while he ſleeping lay,
From his bare forehead cut his locks away:

Rous'd from his dreams, he wak'd in wild ſurpriſe,
And ſoon in tortures wail'd his ſightleſs eyes.
Whilſt grew his head's fair honours unconfin'd,
No force could hold him, and no chain could bind;
But, reft of theſe, he fell a helpleſs prey,
And long in dark confinement's gloom he lay;
Doom'd baſe deriſion's poignant taunts to feel,
While in the mill's dull round he turn'd the wheel.
O Sampſon! Sampſon! he, the judge erewhile
Of Iſrael's tribes, while bleſt with Heav'n's ſweet ſmile;
He, whoſe firm hands the ſword of juſtice held,
And who in wiſdom, as in ſtrength, excell'd,
Ah! how he fell! doom'd, hopeleſs, to deplore
Joys taſted once, but taſted then no more:
For when his foes, on Dagon's honour'd day,
(Sacred to cuſtom'd ſport and feſtive play)
Bade him come forth to pleaſe with fond ſurpriſe
Their barbarous hearts, and glut their gaping eyes,
His ſoul indignant the baſe mockery ſpurn'd,
And with juſt vengeance his ſwoln boſom burn'd;
Furious the maſſy columns, that ſuſtain'd
The crowded dome, he ſeiz'd, and forceful ſtrain'd,

And

And from their baſes the huge pillars tore;
When tottering with vaſt craſh, and wild uproar,
Thundering the fabric fell, and, dire to ſay,
Cruſh'd by its fall and pierc'd with dread diſmay,
Himſelf and foes one mingled ruin lay.

HERCULES *.

Next be our theme Alcides' honour'd name,
A ſecond Sampſon, and perhaps the fame;
Alike for courage and for ſtrength renown'd,
And in each bold empriſe with conqueſt crown'd.
Nemea's vanquiſh'd Lion's well-earn'd ſpoils
Were the firſt meed of his victorious toils;
Next he the Centaurs' direful race ſubdued,
And the half-female Harpies' monſtrous brood;
In death he clos'd the Dragon's watchful eyes,
And from the garden bore the golden prize;
Hell's three-tongued Monſter from her depths he drove,
And brought him trembling to the realms above;
With generous rage the Thracian Peſt he ſlew,
And his gor'd limbs to his own courſers threw.

* In this account of the labours of Hercules, Chaucer has evidently copied Boethius, l. iv. Met. 7.

TYRWHITT, 14101.

The Birds obſcene by human carnage fed,
The fiery Hydra's ever-fruitful head,
Each, in their turn, beneath his faulchion bled;
The vaſt Anteus, glorying in his birth,
Lifeleſs he ſtretch'd upon his parent Earth;
And with fierce rage and furious gripe he tore
The briſtly trophies from the foaming Boar.
Since time began, man's nobleſt friend confeſt,
From earth he ſwept each dire and monſtrous peſt,
Wide as the world's expanſe outſtretch'd his fame,
And every clime rever'd his honour'd name;
This his own pillars could alone confine,
Each plac'd on ample nature's utmoſt line.
Sad Deianira, doom'd by Heaven to prove
The cold requital of neglected love,
Sent him a poiſon'd veſt, in hope once more
Affection's cooling ardour to reſtore:
But the dire gift, unmeet for ſoothing love,
Inſtant the hapleſs youth to madneſs drove;
On a huge pile, that near him flaming ſtood,
Prepar'd to drink the wonted victim's blood,
(His brain by frenzy's raging tortures fir'd)
Furious he leap'd, and in the flames expir'd.

Thus

Thus fell the great Alcides, nature's pride—
Who then in Fortune's ſmiles may hence confide?
Check'd in their mid career, her minions feel
The ſad relapſes of her changeful wheel.
Watch then her wiles! of her baſe arts beware!
For oft, eluſive of all human care,
She ſpreads, when leaſt you expect, th' inſidious ſnare.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

What power of potent words may e'er relate,
Imperial Babylon! thy gorgeous ſtate?
Who may deſcribe thy glowing ſceptre's rays?
And thy vaſt throne's commix'd and mighty blaze?
Twice did thy haughty lord triumphant ride
Beſide devoted Jordan's vanquiſh'd tide;
The faireſt ſons of Iſrael's royal race
(Th' inſulting victor's triumph doom'd to grace)
Far from their much-lov'd Salem's bleſt reſort
Were driven ſad exiles to the tyrant's court;
And theſe among, of wide and honour'd fame,
War's hapleſs victim, holy Daniel came.
When of Chaldæa's boaſted ſeers was found
Not one their monarch's viſions to expound,

To him, by Heav'n's unerring light inſpir'd,
He clear'd each import dark, as he requir'd.
Impell'd by falſe religion's abject fear,
The king had bade his ready minions rear
A form of ſize immenſe; with mandate loud
His heralds inſtant call th' obedient crowd,
Of ev'ry age, and ſex, and name, and race,
Who in his ample empire's boundleſs ſpace
Breath'd vital air, with proſtrate homage low
Before the idol's giant form to bow;
Which, if refus'd, the furnace' flames alone
Might the raſh victim's wilful ſcorn atone.
The menace dire the ſons of Iſrael brav'd,
Sure of that aid, which oft their ſires had ſav'd;
Fearleſs the burning flames untouch'd they trod,
For him what power may hurt, whoſe truſt is God?
His heart, with wealth elate, and ſwoln with pride,
The powers of earth and heaven the king defied,
Till in the ſemblance of a ſylvan beaſt,
Compell'd on herbs, and graſs, and roots to feaſt,
The haughty monarch learn'd at length to know,
That kings are doom'd in turn to taſte of woe:
Transform'd, the flowing honours of his head
Like eagles' plumes adown his waiſt were ſpread;

His

His hands he ſaw, with feather'd down o'ergrown,
Bird-like were arm'd with talons not their own.
Thus hapleſs did he fare, till were fulfill'd
Th' appointed years, which Heav'n's juſt laws had will'd;
Then to his God his chaſten'd ſoul return'd,
And with warm love and zeal unwearied burn'd.

BELSHAZZAR.

Yet ill-inſtructed by their ſire's diſgrace,
Pride's direſt curſes ſcourg'd his haughty race:
Belſhazzar next ſucceeds, whoſe recreant mind
To baſeſt idols all his ſoul reſign'd;
Yet ſoon Heav'n's righteous arm his pride chaſtiz'd,
And broke the ſceptre, he ſo vainly priz'd.
For, on a day, when each Chaldæan lord,
Call'd by his maſter to his feſtal board,
The royal banquet grac'd, with power elate
Counting his ſlaves the flatter'd deſpot ſate;
"And inſtant forth," with tone of joy, he cries,
"Be each rich veſſel brought, the well-earn'd prize
"My honour'd ſire's reſiſtleſs ardour won,
"When to his arm fell Judah's vanquiſh'd throne:
"From theſe libations copious we will pour
"To the great gods, Chaldæa's ſons adore."

Then did the king, and his tumultuous crew,
With heighten'd zeal the banquet's joys renew;
Thoſe cups, which erſt the holy temple grac'd,
Now in rude mirth by hands unmeet embrac'd,
And e'en by harlots' lips impure profan'd,
Oft and again to foul exceſs were drain'd;
Till ſudden rous'd, and pierc'd with dread appal,
The king with eyes of horror view'd the wall,
Whereon ſelf-mov'd a wondrous hand unknown
Had the fam'd writing trac'd upon the ſtone.
Not one in vaſt Chaldæa's wide domain
Could the dark legend on the wall explain.
The queen at length the Jewiſh captive ſought,
And holy Daniel to the monarch brought;
Who thus—" To thee, O king! full well is known
" Th' unrivall'd grandeur of thy father's throne;
" To him in wide profuſion generous Heav'n
" Wealth, empire, honour, had indulgent given:
" But pride defeated God's benign intent,
" And poiſon'd every boon his mercy ſent:
" For this, (ſo will'd his wiſe and juſt decree)
" Driven from the bands of ſweet ſociety;
" Torn from his throne, and e'en his figure chang'd,
" In form a beaſt, the lonely wilds he rang'd;

" There,

" There, wretched outcaſt! 'mong the ſylvan brood,
" Condemn'd to pick his poor precarious food,
" Long time he liv'd; till to his harden'd heart
" God deign'd his grace all-potent to impart;
" Then to his former ſtate once more reſtor'd,
" Heav'n's hallow'd King repentant he ador'd.
" Him though fell pride to woes ſo poignant led,
" Still the ſame ſteps too faithful doſt thou tread:
" Foe to thy God, thy rebel heart alone
" Bows to baſe idols, form'd of ſenſeleſs ſtone.
" Thyſelf haſt dar'd, amid thy wanton train,
" The temple's holy veſſels to profane,
" Thine impious lips did Heav'n's dread power deride,
" And boldly God's avenging arm defied.
" 'Twas for this cauſe, by offended Heav'n's command,
" That on the wall thus wrote the ſelf-mov'd hand;
" And this the awful doom the words portend—
" O king, thine empire haſtens to its end."
By the keen ſwords of hoſtile Perſians ſlain,
That night Belſhazzar clos'd his impious reign.
Thus Fortune, whom ſhe deſtines, ſoon forſakes,
And from him wealth, and fame, and friends ſhe takes.

ZENOBIA.

ZENOBIA *.

From the rich blood of Perſia's monarchs ſprung,
Zenobia's praiſes through the world are ſung;
By culture poliſh'd, and with conqueſt crown'd,
Alike for arts, and arms, was ſhe renown'd.
In childhood's tender years her manly mind
Each ſofter care and female art reſign'd;
Pleas'd to the woods in Dian's train to go,
She vied in fleetneſs with the bounding doe;
And in the trembling victim's panting heart,
Sure of her aim, ſhe plung'd her purpled dart.
Mature of ſtrength, with ſinewy arm ſhe tore
The briſtly trophies from the furious boar;
Leopards and lions to her force would yield,
Stretch'd by her arm upon the blood-ſtain'd field.
Such were the toils ſhe bore with keen delight;
Oft on the mountain's brow, the orb of night
Saw her fleet ſtep imprint the new-fall'n dew,
Intent her hardy paſtime to purſue;
Unſhelter'd oft, by toil to reſt compos'd,
In ſleep's ſoft foundeſt bands her eyes ſhe clos'd.

* V. Boccace De Caſ. Vir. l. viii. c. 7; & De Claris Mul. from which our author has plainly taken almoſt every circumſtance of his narration. TYRWHITT, ver. 14253.

Miſtreſs

Miſtreſs alike of each athletic game,
That knits by toil robuſt the vigorous frame,
With her none dar'd, of ſtrength whate'er or age,
In wreſtling's ſturdy conflict to engage.
Long while in virgin freedom ſhe remain'd,
And ſocial wedlock's proffer'd bands diſdain'd:
At length her kindneſs Odenate implor'd,
And him ſhe accepted for her wedded lord.
Diſcord's dire jars did ne'er their days moleſt,
But love's pure ſweets their happy union bleſt.
Yet though, in combat on th' embattled field,
To none in deeds of death ſhe deign'd to yield,
In ſober wiſdom's grave purſuits ſhe joy'd,
And reaſon's calmer feaſts her hours employ'd.
The chace ſhe lov'd, but gladly ſhe reſign'd
Its meaner joys, to form her cultur'd mind;
Yet did ſhe not diſdain the gaudy ſhow,
Which ſcepter'd potentates to grandeur owe;
The pureſt gems of Aſia deck'd her throne,
Or ſhot bright radiance from her coſtly zone;
Where'er ſhe led her valiant troops around,
The palm of bright ſucceſs their labours crown'd;
Her power reſiſtleſs ſwept the conquer'd eaſt,
And Rome's bright trophies oft her fame increas'd.

What

What various toils her dauntleſs ſoul engag'd,
What kings ſhe conquer'd, and what wars ſhe wag'd,
What woes at length the hapleſs queen befel,
Let tender Petrarch's flowing numbers tell.

Nor with leſs power ſhe rul'd, when adverſe fate
Call'd from her aid her brave and honour'd mate;
E'en then, ſupported by her arm alone,
Increaſing ſplendor mark'd her envied throne:
So oft with hills of ſlain the plains ſhe ſtrew'd,
With rage ſo fierce her foes ſo oft purſu'd,
That every prince around her grace implor'd,
Bleſt, if unhurt he ſcap'd her conquering ſword.
With dread her rapid ſtrides Egyptia ſaw,
Yet dar'd ſhe ne'er her ready ſword to draw;
Againſt her Syria's lords fix'd hate impell'd,
But fear's chill power their willing hands withheld;
Arabia's valiant princes pin'd in vain,
Aw'd by her threats, they only dar'd complain.
She check'd e'en Rome's fierce eagle's bold career,
And taught the world's proud lords her arms to fear.
But ah! with fortune's choiceſt ſweets combin'd,
The dregs of bittereſt gall too oft we find.
Thus this fam'd queen (the beams of ſunſhine paſt)
To miſery's darkeſt gloom was plung'd at laſt.

Fortune

Fortune at length her long-lov'd favourite fail'd,
And o'er the hapleſs queen her foes prevail'd;
Driven in diſorder from the routed field,
Her flying troops to fierce Aurelian yield;
And (direr ſtill) herſelf by fate's ſtern doom
Was led, ſad captive, to inſulting Rome:
There in keen mockery on her head ſhe bore
Her crown's loſt honours, hers, alas! no more;
Whilſt round her arms, and o'er her ſigh-ſwoln breaſt,
Chains, deck'd with taunting gold, her woes confeſs'd.

NERO.

To Nero's fiend-like ſoul the fates denied
Virtue's ſweet grace, but largely they ſupplied
Thoſe meaner gifts, which vulgar eyes admire,
And ceaſeleſs crave with unappeas'd deſire:
Wide as the world's extent his empire lay,
And every climate bow'd beneath his ſway;
Proud was each region to their lord to pour
The copious tribute of their varied ſtore;
In gayeſt ſplendour deck'd, his gorgeous veſt
Glow'd with each trophy from the plunder'd eaſt;
The diamond's blaze, the ſapphire's ſofter hue,
Clad in her robe of bright etherial blue,

With

With theſe commix'd the modeſt pearl was ſeen,
And the gay emerald bright in vivid green:
Yet did in vain the brighteſt gems combine
In lovely radiance on that breaſt to ſhine,
Which, to each deed of deadlieſt darkneſs prone,
The furies, imps of hell, poſſeſs'd alone.
The hateful monſter view'd with ſavage joy
Wide-waſting flames imperial Rome deſtroy;
To his curſt ear the ſhriek of heart-wrung woe
Could, like ſweet ſounds, ſenſations bland beſtow.
Born to diſgrace mankind, with unheard pride
T' excel in every odious vice he tried,
And nature's laws and man's alike defied;
Not e'en (dire deed) a ſiſter's honour'd name
Had power to curb his fierce inceſtuous flame;
Nor could a mother's tender tears reſtrain
His impious hands from murder's hateful ſtain.
Form'd in fair culture's plaſtic mould, his youth,
Bleſs'd with the ſmiles of innocence and truth,
Virtue's pure laws long while in peace obey'd,
And well his wiſe preceptor's toils repaid:
Then his warm heart with grateful ardour glow'd,
And him he honour'd, to whom all he ow'd;

Then

Then from his ſeat reſpectful would he riſe,
Whene'er his honour'd maſter met his eyes.
But ſoon life's giddy joys o'erwhelm'd his ſoul,
Soon he renounc'd fair virtue's ſweet controul:
His maſter then with joy no more he view'd,
E'en with fell hatred he the ſage purſued,
And in his blood at length his hands embrued.

But fortune ſoon her ſheltering arm withdrew,
Then ills unnumber'd quick his ſteps purſue;
With uproar wild th' indignant Romans roſe,
An injur'd nation, and an hoſt of foes:
With conſcious fear the hopeleſs tyrant flies;
Where'er he turns, he hears a people's cries,
Who load with curſes dire th' affrighted ſkies.
Appal'd he ſhrinks with ſtill-increaſing dread,
No ſhelter finds to hide his hated head.
In vain ſome pitying friend his tears implor'd,
Deep in his tortur'd breaſt to plunge his ſword;
Unpitied, and alone, he life reſign'd,
The ſcourge, the curſe, the ſcorn of all mankind.

HOLOFERNES.

Through the wide eaſt was Holofernes known,
The firſt great ſatrap of the Perſian throne;

Him,

Him, ſent to ſcourge rebellious Iſrael's race,
A female arm o'erwhelm'd with dire diſgrace;
Judith, with patriot ardour nobly fir'd,
To ſave her country from the foe aſpir'd;
In friendly guiſe the hoſtile camp ſhe ſought,
A tale deluſive to the leader brought.
The tale, commended by her winning charms,
The wonted foreſight of the chief diſarms:
Safe in the ſhelter of his tent receiv'd,
The daring maid Bethulia's fears reliev'd,
Smote off, in ſleep's ſoft hour, the tyrant's head,
And with the reeking ſpoil in ſafety fled.

ANTIOCHUS *.

Renown'd Antiochus! thy wide-ſpread name,
The pride of Perſia once, at length the ſhame,
For deeds of greatneſs through the world waſt known,
Fame, ſplendour, honour, empire, all thine own;
Wafted by fortune's favouring gale ſo high,
Thy towering hopes aſpir'd to touch the ſky.
Drunk with ſucceſs, thy proud and daring ſoul
Thought thy ſtrong arm might nature's laws controul,

* This tragedy is a poetical paraphraſe of 2 Maccabees, c. ix.
TYRWHITT, ver. 14493.

Might

Might ſink the mountains to the lowly plain,
And e'en old Ocean's foaming rage reſtrain.
Oft, ſwoln to madneſs with indignant pride,
Haſt thou the thunders of high heaven defied;
With ſcorn each ſubject nation haſt thou view'd,
And God's own people with fix'd hate purſued.
Gall'd that thy troops, in war's eventful field,
Were forc'd to Iſrael's hated ſons to yield,
Thy mighty hoſt was rang'd in fierce array,
To Salem's towers was mark'd their deſtin'd way—
But, check'd by Heaven, ſoon ſinks thy haughty rage,
And nearer cares thy penſive thoughts engage;
To dire diſeaſe a prey, thy putrid blood,
(That leap'd erewhile like a reſiſtleſs flood,
And taught thine eyes with vengeful flames to glow)
Now ſcarce is felt with feebleſt pace to flow;
From the foul maſs corruption's millions breed,
Spread their wide waſte, and on thine entrails feed;
Thy noiſome ſtench no potent ſpells may cure,
None near abide, and ſcarce thyſelf endure!
See! far from men the wretched outcaſt flies,
And in a lonely mountain friendleſs dies!

ALEXANDER.

Who hath not heard of Philip's wondrous ſon,
The world's great dread, the pride of Macedon?

Conqueſt he taught with bolder wing to ſoar
O'er untried climes, and lands unknown before;
Till earth's remoteſt bounds too ſoon obtain'd,
He wept, that nought unconquer'd yet remain'd.
The world he won; but, ah! himſelf he loſt;
By uncurb'd paſſion's boiſt'rous billows toſt;
Wine's frantic joys, and love's licentious flame,
Still blaſt his laurels, and obſcure his fame.
Yet did full ſoon this meteor diſappear,
For twelve ſhort years he preſs'd his bold career,
Then o'er that arm foul poiſon's power prevail'd,
Which nations, leagued in war, in vain aſſail'd.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

From humble ſtate to empire's envied height,
Immortal Cæſar roſe in fate's deſpight;
Pompey's keen ſword, that won the vanquiſh'd Eaſt,
His younger rival's mightier arm confeſs'd:
Yet ſhort and tranſient was the flattering hour;
Cæſar himſelf ſoon felt frail Fortune's power:
The Eaſt ſubdued, and Pompey now no more,
Pharſalia's laurels home the victor bore.
But Rome's ſtern patriot band, untaught to bear
One, whoſe high ſoul with none in fame would ſhare,
E'en while the ſun beheld the daring deed,
From ſlavery's dreaded yoke their country freed,

Ruſh'd

Ruſh'd on the chief, that had the world ſubdued,
And in his blood their vengeful blades embrued.
Yet ſtill unaw'd, though pierc'd with many a wound,
The fainting hero calmly look'd around,
And, conſcious of his doom, with decent pride,
Drew his fall'n robe his limbs expos'd to hide,
And as he nobly liv'd, he greatly died.

CRŒSUS *.

Though on fam'd Crœſus fortune deign'd to pour
Unuſual ſtreams from her exhauſtleſs ſtore,
Yet could not theſe unruffled peace enſure,
Nor e'en from perils dire their lord ſecure;
Torn by rude force, and doom'd in raging fire
With torture's keeneſt anguiſh to expire;
When ſudden, lo! loud peals the welkin rend,
And in huge torrents burſting clouds deſcend,
Whelm'd by the floods, the raging flames are drown'd,
And the ſcap'd victim heaven's kind mercies own'd:

* The greateſt part of this ſtory is taken from the Rom. de la R. ver. 6847—6912. TYRWHITT, ver. 14645.
It is related of Polycrates of Samos, by Herodotus—Thalia. BELOE'S Tranſ. v. ii. p. 147.

Yet not ſuch perils might his rage reſtrain,
For war's dire conflicts ſoon he pants again:
Sav'd once by Heav'n, he dreams, with groundleſs joy,
That him no human foe may e'er deſtroy.
One night he dream'd, that, as ſuſpended high
On a huge tree, whoſe branches touch'd the ſky,
Great Jove himſelf became his menial ſlave,
And deign'd with heavenly ſtreams his limbs to lave;
This done, the God of day with ſtudious care
Chaf'd his fair ſkin, and dried his dripping hair.
Awak'd, with added pride his boſom ſwells,
Then to his daughter pleas'd the tale he tells,
Bids the wiſe maid weigh well each flattering ſign,
And quick his dream's myſterious ſenſe divine.
With ſorrowing voice th' obedient maid replied,
"Would that the ſad recital I might hide!
"But oh! my ſire! in the wide branching tree
"My eyes, forewarn'd, the fatal gallows ſee;
"Thy body thence ſuſpended ſhall remain,
"Not waſh'd by Jove, but drench'd with pouring rain;
"And, when gay Phœbus ſhines with radiance clear,
"Dried by his beams thy limbs ſhall white appear."
Too well the preſcient maid the truth declar'd,
And ſoon the king his fate expected ſhar'd.

Him

Him nought his throne, nor treaſur'd heaps could ſave,
Doom'd to dire death, and e'en denied a grave.
Thus fickle Fortune oft aſſails the proud,
And her face hides behind a watery cloud.

PEDRO OF SPAIN.

Sad is the taſk in words of woe to tell,
By what dire fate unhappy Pedro fell;
Pedro, the pride of Spain, with envy view'd
E'en by a brother's eye, who long purſued
With rancour's keeneſt arts his deſtin'd prey,
And chas'd him from his native realms away.
Pierc'd with deep wounds in many a well-fought field,
Still ſcorn'd his great undaunted ſoul to yield:
Yet when eventful war's dire terrors fail'd,
The wiles of baſe deceit at length prevail'd;
Him to his tent his foe perfidious drew,
And with a brother's hand his hated rival ſlew.

PEDRO OF CYPRUS.

Thou too of Cyprus, whoſe immortal name,
When * Alexandria fell, to growing fame

* Alexandria in Egypt was won, and immediately after abandoned in 1365, by Pierre de Luſignan, king of Cyprus.—Walſingham mentions the taking of Alexandria (p. 186), and adds, Interfuerunt autem huic captioni cum rege Cypriæ *plures Anglici et Aquitanici*, referentes tam in Angliam quam in Aquitaniam

Through the wide world's remoteſt regions known,
Thy braveſt peers for matchleſs deeds outſhone!
Yet thine own ſubjects view'd with envious eye
Thoſe matchleſs deeds, that rais'd thy name ſo high;
Impatient of thy worth, their baſe commands
Thy life requir'd, e'en from a murderer's hands.

BARNABO VISCONTI*.

Nor yet to thee denied ſhall be the meed,
By fame to valour's generous ſons decreed,
Milan's great boaſt, and Barnabo thy name!
Whoſe deeds the woes of Lombardy proclaim.
Yet might not theſe thy forfeit life ſecure,
E'en thine own houſe could not thy fame endure;
He, who to thee in ſtricteſt bonds was tied,
By love's ſoft cement, as by blood allied,
Made thy beſt days in mournful thraldom pine,
Then bade thee, loſt to hope, thy generous ſoul reſign!

HUGH OF PISA.

What tongue but faulters, if it ſtrive to tell
Th' unheard-of woes, that hapleſs Hugh befel?

pannos aureos et holoſericos, ſplendoreſque gemmarum exoticos in teſtimonium tantæ victoriæ. TYRWHITT, ver. 5151, vol. iv.

* Duke of Milan, depoſed by his nephew, and thrown into priſon, where he died 1385. TYRWHITT, ver. 14709.

Not

Not far from Piſa's walls, of rugged mien,
Antique and high, a lonely tower was ſeen;
In this, by faction's lawleſs force immur'd,
Great Hugh long time a captive's fate endur'd;
And with him were his little children three,
The eldeſt ſcarcely five years was of age,
Alas! alas! how dire the cruelty!
To ſhut up birds ſo ſweet in ſuch a cage!

One night it chanc'd, that at th' expected hour,
When the harſh jailor to the lonely tower
Was wont his coarſe and ſcanty meal to bring,
Sudden his ears with ſounds unuſual ring,
As if, rebellowing with tremendous roar,
Th' eternal gates had clos'd, to ope no more.

Deep on his ſoul impreſs'd, the awful thought
Drops of keen anguiſh to his eyelids brought;
Yet nought he ſaid: but the obſervant eye
Of watchful youth is quick each change to ſpy;
His younger child beheld the trickling tears,
And, as unus'd his heart to boding fears,
And but to preſent ills his ſenſe awake,
Thus with weak voice the trembling infant ſpake:

"Whence are theſe tears, dear, beſt of fathers! ſay,
"Are they to weep our jailor's long delay?

" And that no morſel thy fond heart can give
" Thy dear-lov'd babes, though ſtarving, to relieve?
" Oh! if one bit, how ſmall ſoe'er, remains,
" Give it t' aſſuage my hunger's dreadful pains."
Daily did thus the child his ſire implore,
Till, worn with want, he could complain no more;
And when he found his prayer was ſtill denied,
" Farewel," he ſaid, his father kiſs'd, and died.
Pierc'd at the ſight, unbounded rage poſſeſt
The frantic father's agonizing breaſt;
With his own teeth, o'ercome with grief, he tore
His lean lank arms, diſtain'd with ſtreams of gore.
His babes, unconſcious of grief's maddening power,
Thought he for hunger did his arms devour,
And ſaid, " Dear father, let our fleſh aſſuage
" The direful torments of thy hunger's rage:
" Thou gav'ſt it firſt; then why doſt thou repine,
" Again t' accept a right ſo juſtly thine?"
Thus ſpake they both their laſt; for ſoon he view'd
Them too ſink lifeleſs, by dire want ſubdued;
Not long could nature bear ſuch poignant grief,
And death ſoon brought the wretched ſire relief.

Who

Who liſts more full to read this tale of woe,
Let him to Dante's deathleſs pages go *.

* A very fine picture exhibiting this ſubject is in the poſſeſſion of the Duke of Dorſet, at Knowle in Kent, painted by Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE.

"STAY, good Sir Monk," the gentle Knight replies;
" What we've already heard may well ſuffice;
" For few there are, but quickly would forego,
" For one light tale, the themes of tendereſt woe.
" Keenly, I own, their grief my heart partakes,
" Whom fickle fortune's wavering ſmile forſakes;
" Nor leſs I'm pleas'd, if haply one relate
" The riſe of modeſt worth from low eſtate:
" Such are the tales that generous joy beſtow,
" And teach man's heart its nobleſt powers to know."
" Yea, by St. Paul's great bell," our Hoſt replies,
" Let us, good Monk, have no more tragedies;
" Not that, as ſome, compos'd of melting ſtuff,
" My heart, thank Heaven, is ſtout and ſomewhat tough;
" And, but that rous'd by the ne'er-ceaſing clang
" Of jingling bells, that from thy bridle hang,

" Long

" Long ſince bound faſt in ſleep's ſoft, ſenſeleſs chain,
" Thy tales had all to me been told in vain.
" Though, when the matter well befits my mind,
" I ne'er a want of due attention find.
" Tell us of hunting's joys, and manly feats;
" Such is the theme that beſt our liking meets!"
" Nay," ſaid the Monk, " in ſports I boaſt no ſkill,
" Let then my poſt ſome worthier brother fill."
To the Nun's Prieſt then quick our Hoſt applied,
" And, ſir," he ſaid, " though on a jade you ride,
" That's lean, and reſtif, and not worth a groat,
" Let not that check your gay and lively thought;
" Laugh while you can, nor diſtant evils fear,
" And let our hearts ſome merry ſtory cheer."
" Pleas'd," he return'd, " your mandate I obey,
" And, truſt me, laugh I will, whene'er I may."

THE

THE

NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE.

TIME's ſnowy honours ſprinkled on her head,
Her peaceful life an aged widow led;
A lofty grove, her humble cot behind,
Fenc'd off the rudeneſs of the weſtern wind:
In front a limpid ſtream meand'ring flow'd,
And breath'd gay health around the neat abode.
Small were her means, and ſlender was her ſtore,
Yet did her ſober wiſh ne'er pine for more;
For her each year increas'd three fruitful ſows,
For her, with well-ſwoln teats, three ruddy cows;
And, theſe beſides, a favourite ewe ſhe kept,
Which oft in winter in her chamber ſlept.
Pledges of early love, indulgent Heaven
Two blooming daughters to her hopes had given.
No coſtly dainties on her board were ſeen;
Her fare was homely, but her table clean:
No wine ſhe taſted, neither pale nor red,
With black and white alone her board was ſpread,
With bowls of milk, and loaves of good brown bread.

Far

Far from her cot repletion's ills withdrew,
Her ſteady nerves nor gout nor palſy knew:
But though luxurious dainties were denied,
Yet patient induſtry each want ſupplied;
And Heaven's beſt boon, unbought with hoards of wealth,
Crown'd every other bleſſing, jocund health.

A yard ſhe had, inclos'd with pales about,
Drain'd, and defended by a ditch without,
In which a cock ſhe kept, nam'd Chanticleer;
His pipe ſo ſhrill in crowing had no peer:
He, as if vers'd in problems of the ſchools,
Obſerv'd full nicely aſtronomic rules,
And, when th' horizon points fifteen below
The ſun had reach'd, 'gan luſtily to crow.

His comb, embattled like a caſtle-wall,
Red as fine coral, menac'd fate to all;
Bright was his bill, and black as ripen'd ſloe,
Azure his ſtately leg, and taper toe;
White were his nails, as lilies, to behold,
And his gay plumage was of burniſh'd gold.

This gallant cock ſeven faithful hens attend,
And to his royal will obedient bend;

Though

Though ſiſters all, they all his favours ſhare,
Like him in colour, as in ſhape and air:
But, theſe among, above the reſt was ſeen
The lovely Partolete, his favourite queen:
Courteous ſhe was, diſcreet, and debonnair;
To Chanticleer ſhe bore herſelf ſo fair,
That ſhe alone above her peers confeſs'd
Reign'd the lov'd empreſs of her hero's breaſt.
Bleſs'd in his love, his bliſs no fears alloy,
And every day ſhone bright with cloudleſs joy;
His looks, his motions all, his bliſs atteſt,
And his gay ſongs his lively joys expreſs'd.

Oh! what delight to hear the faithful pair
Pour their ſoft warblings through the vernal air!
For birds, not mute as now, in days of old
The powers of ſpeech poſſeſs'd, as oft we're told,
And well their joys and fears could then rehearſe
In the ſweet numbers of reſponſive verſe.

One night it chanc'd, when perch'd aloft he ſate,
(His wives amidſt, and next his beſt lov'd mate)
Sudden (dire omen) from his rattling throat
A harſh, diſcordant, wild, and faultering note
Forth iſſued frequent, while his labouring frame
Shook as convuls'd, and wak'd his favourite dame:

Alarm'd,

Alarm'd, aſkance her much-lov'd lord ſhe ey'd,
And, more ſurpris'd, him ſleeping ſtill ſhe ſpied;
" Whence is," ſhe cried, " this harſh and direful
ſcream?
" What viſion ſtrange diſturbs thy reſtleſs dream?"
" Lend," he replied, " my love, a patient ear,
" And thou my dream's portentous tale ſhalt hear.
" Methought, as round our yard my walk I took,
" Mine eyes a beaſt of hideous figure ſtruck;
" His frightful ſkin, of mix'd and varied hue,
" Yellow, and red, my fix'd attention drew;
" With black his tail was tipp'd, that ſwept the ground,
" With black his pendent ears were edg'd around,
" And his ſtern aſpect, and his eyeballs red,
" Still ſink my ſoul with undiminiſh'd dread."
" Oh! ſhame," ſhe anſwer'd, " on thy coward heart,
" That dares to me ſuch idle fears impart;
" Far nobler thoughts thy ſtrengthen'd ſoul muſt prove,
" Or hence no longer may'ſt thou claim my love;
" For how ſhall him my warm affections prize,
" Who dares not fancy's airy foes deſpiſe?
" Repletion's joys indulg'd all dreams ſupply,
" The vapoury fumes of ſuperfluity.

" Thus

" Thus oft in man, when in his blood 'tis found,
" That fiery particles too much abound,
" Arrows, and flames, and forms of ghaſtly red,
" Fill, with ſtrange viſions, his bewilder'd head;
" Beaſts of portentous ſhape before him fight,
" And frightful phantoms crowd his aching ſight;
" Demons and imps his heated fancy views,
" He thinks each haggard ſprite his ſteps purſues.
" Then fail not, love moſt dear! with watchful care
" Againſt ſuch dreams terrific to prepare;
" Theſe humours crude ſome med'cines briſk ſhall drain,
" And every latent ill in time reſtrain.
" Then, deareſt Chanticleer, ſince well you know
" In your warm veins what ardent juices flow,
" Beware, leſt haply they be too replete,
" When raging Sol aſcends his burning ſeat;
" If thus they be, no earthly foreſight knows
" What ills thy frame may ſeize, what direful woes;
" Fever's fierce fires thy ſhorten'd days may end,
" And immature to the dark grave may ſend;
" Or quartan's gradual waſte thy ſtrength conſume,
" And nip thy bloſſoms in their earlieſt bloom.

" Thus

" Thus too old Cato's maxims ſage adviſe,
" The idle phantaſies of dreams deſpiſe."
" Madam," he ſaid, " though Cato's honour'd name
" Hath gain'd the ſummit of immortal fame,
" Yet are there thoſe, who heights as great have reach'd,
" And doctrines quite reverſe have boldly preach'd:
" Theſe from experience' ſtable teſt maintain,
" That dreams are neither fanciful nor vain;
" And clear the deſtinies of man foreſhew,
" Heralds of joy, or harbingers of woe.
" * Once on a time, as ancient authors ſay,
" Two comrade youths purſued their deſtin'd way;
" A town they reach'd, but there no ſhelter found,
" Such crowds innumerous preſs'd each houſe around.
" So that to part at length they both agreed,
" To try how each alone might beſt ſucceed.

* Cicero (de Divin. l. 1. c. 27.) relates this and the following ſtory, but in a contrary order, and with ſo many other differences, that one might be led to ſuſpect that he was here quoted at ſecond hand, if it were not uſual with Chaucer in theſe ſtories of familiar life to throw in a number of natural circumſtances, not to be found in his original authors.

TYRWHITT, ver. 14990.

" One in a ſtall with beaſts, on heaps of hay,
" Worn with fatigue, was glad his limbs to lay;
" The other (ſo capricious chance ordain'd)
" In a neat houſe a decent lodging gain'd.
" Soon ſleep's ſoft bands his wearied eyelids cloſe,
" But ſhort and broken was his wiſh'd repoſe;
" Dreaming his comrade's voice he ſeems to hear,
" The well-known accents ſtrike his ſtartled ear;
" Haſte, hither haſte, he cries, thine aid to lend,
" Or in an ox's ſtall thy murder'd friend,
" Ere this ſhort night be paſs'd, his life ſhall end.
" Sudden he ſtarts, but liſtening keen around,
" Nor voice of friend, nor breath of life he found;
" Again he ſinks to reſt, again he hears
" The well-known voice, again he chides his fears;
" Yet a third time the ſounds his ears aſſail,
" His friend appears, and tells his mournful tale.
" Here, drench'd in gore, thy murder'd friend behold!
" The hapleſs victim of corrupting gold.
" Soon as the ſun ſhall riſe, with ſpeed repair
" To this vile town's weſt gate, thine eyes will there
" A cart of dung deſcry, in which convey'd
" From whence I ſlept my laſt my corſe is laid.

" Scarce

" Scarce had the ſun above the eaſt aroſe,
" When forth, his abſent friend to ſeek, he goes:
" But finds him not. Upris'n at break of day,
" Your friend, the hoſtler ſays, purſued his way.
" Now in his mind ſuſpicious bodings grew,
" Again his dream's dire horrors roſe to view;
" Impatient to the weſtern gate he hies,
" The cart of dung there meets his wond'ring eyes:
" Help, help! he furious calls; this cart contains
" My murder'd comrade's maim'd and cold remains!
" Rous'd by his cries, a crowd collects around,
" And the vile load hurls inſtant to the ground,
" In which, with gore diſtain'd, the breathleſs corſe they found.
" (Oh, murder! ſin moſt dire! in vain is tried
" Each ſpecious art thy deep foul guilt to hide,
" In vain thy deeds of darkneſs ſhun the ſight,
" Heaven's ſearching lamp will bring them all to light.)
" Soon the juſt laws the murderers baſe purſue,
" And doom to each the fate ſo juſtly due.
" Here then, ſweet Partlet, by the event 'tis found,
" That dreams are ſometimes built on ſtable ground;
" Nor this alone, but the ſame book records
" Proof ſtill more full—attend th' impreſſive words.

" Two men, their eyes with foreign ſights to pleaſe,
" In friendly concert fix'd to croſs the ſeas;
" Alert the port they reach, but th' adverſe gale
" Forbade that night the ready bark to ſail;
" Next day the breeze, propitious to their prayer,
" Bids for the morrow every hand prepare.
" One of theſe friends, when now ſleep's ſoothing power
" Held her ſoft reign, at midnight's ſilent hour,
" An unknown form beheld, whoſe firm command
" Bade him his purpoſe quit, nor leave the land;
" Duly, he ſaid, my well-weigh'd mandate keep,
" Nor glut the fury of th' expecting deep!
" The morn arriv'd, he wakes his ſleeping friend,
" And earneſt bids him to his dream attend;
" Urges his wiſh their deſtin'd courſe to ſtay,
" Nor hazard life's frail tenure for a day.
" With ſcorn his bolder comrade mocks his fears,
" And ſtill unmov'd his vain remonſtrance hears:
" What from vain dreams, he ſaid, can mortals know,
" That they for them ſhould e'er their plans forego?
" Sometimes diſturb'd men dream of owls and apes,
" Of wanton whimſies and of wondrous ſhapes,

" Ideal

" Ideal forms, diſtemper'd fancy's train,
" The ſhadowy vapours of a feveriſh brain:
" But if thou dare not truſt th' inviting gale,
" Spite of thy fears, myſelf alone will ſail.
" This ſaid, he went—but ere that half her courſe
" The bark had gain'd, a tempeſt's ſudden force
" Whelm'd her ingulph'd, nor ſtrength nor ſkill could ſave
" One hapleſs victim from th' unpitying wave.
" 'Twas in a dream, as legends old relate,
" To Kenelm Heav'n foretold his bloody fate;
" His ſapient nurſe the portent dark divin'd,
" And arm'd with caution ſage his tender mind.
" But the gay ſpirits of unheeding youth
" Heard unconvinc'd the voice of ſober truth.
" His life his folly paid. Hence, Partlet, ſee
" The power of dreams, nor truſt alone in me;
" Let authors grave in various ages born
" The truth confirm, and check thy groundleſs ſcorn.
" Macrobius' pages firſt their force proclaim,
" And, theſe beſides, a book of worthier name,
" E'en holy Writ proofs ſtrong and clear affords,
" And Daniel's pow'rs, and Joſeph's deeds records.

" Thus did a dream to Lydia's king foreſhew
" The laſt diſgraceful ſcene, that clos'd his woe.
" A dream, Andromache *! firſt rous'd thy fears,
" And bath'd thy cheeks with unavailing tears,
" When firm of ſoul, though blind to fate, thy lord
" Ruſh'd on the conquering Greeks' reſiſtleſs ſword.
" But morn appears, and though thy charms inſpire
" Joy to my heart, and ever-new deſire;
" Yet of thy laxatives, I pray, no more,
" On noſtrums of old wives I ſet no ſtore;
" Bleſt in thy love, I every fear defy,
" And, when with thee, believe no danger nigh."
This ſaid, he ſprung all joyous to the ground,
And, having there a grain of barley found,
Clucking he call'd his wand'ring dames around.

Now had that vigorous month (in which began
Creation's plaſtic power, and new form'd man

* We muſt not look for this dream of Andromache in Homer: the firſt author who relates it is the fictitious Dares, c. xxiv; and Chaucer very probably took it from him, or from Guido de Columnis, or perhaps from Benoit de Sainte More, whoſe Roman de Troye I believe to have been that hiſtory of Dares, which Guido profeſſes to follow, and has indeed almoſt entirely tranſlated. TYRWHITT, ver. 15147.

Sprang,

Sprang, heav'n-call'd, into life) now March had paſs'd,
And, April gone, May's roſeate bloom at laſt
Smil'd wide around, when ſwoln in all his pride,
His ſeven attendant queens their lord beſide,
Gay Chanticleer look'd up, and eyed the ſun,
That in the ſign of Taurus now had run
Some twenty points or more: this well he knew,
Of art untaught, by pure inſtinctive view.
"Partlet," he ſays, "my beſt and ſole delight!
"See! with his beams how Sol in radiance bright
"Glads the gay world, and bids each bird to ſing,
"And hail with varied note the new-born ſpring!
"Cheer'd by the ſcene my lifted heart o'erflows,
"And nought but joy unmix'd, enraptur'd knows."
But ah! how ſhort's the term of tranſient joy!
Woe quick ſucceeds, its ſad but ſure alloy.
Attend the mournful tale, which I engage
Is true as in the captivating page
Of Lancelot du Lake, whoſe deeds of fire
Heroic ardour in each heart inſpire,
But dames of tender ſouls above all admire.
For a vile fox, that long had ſhelter found
In the tall grove, that ſcreen'd the yard around,

Had that ſad night the faithleſs fence o'erleap'd,
And in a bed of greens in ambuſh crept.
Thus murderers baſe their bloody plots purſue,
And ever ſlink with conſcious ſhame from view.
O treachery! ſin deform'd, thy hateful arts
Tinge with malignant gall the gentleſt hearts!
Nature with bounteous hand to all aſſign'd
Pity's ſoft balm, the milk of human kind;
The precious boon e'en Judas' ſelf poſſeſs'd,
Till falſehood's wiles debas'd his harden'd breaſt.
Sinon's falſe heart with kindneſs once had glow'd,
And tender tears had from his eyelids flow'd:
But, urg'd by thee, he toil'd with barbarous joy,
Till, from her baſe o'erturn'd, he view'd imperial Troy.
That morn undeck'd, as erſt, with ſtreams of gold,
Red roſe the ſun, and dire events foretold.
Ah! what avail'd the clear prophetic dream,
Thy Partlet's horrors at thy midnight ſcream?
Fate gives the word, the deſtin'd hour is come,
And thou, gay Chanticleer, muſt meet thy doom.
Let doctors grave the queſtion dark explain,
How God's decrees the powers of man reſtrain;

Theſe

Theſe lighter rhimes ill ſuits ſuch deep debate;
My tale's of a gay Cock, who, blind to fate,
Scorn'd the ſage counſels of his wiſer mate.
But, truth to ſay, mankind full oft have found
A wife's advice but groundleſs, and unſound.
This was the cauſe that our firſt parents drove
From bliſsful Eden's ever-ſmiling grove—
But ſtay, raſh pen, thy courſe, nor here expound
More on a theme ſo nice, which may be found
In many a page ſet forth by wits more bold,
Whoſe works of female wiles have largely told.

Reckleſs of ill, now gallant Chanticleer
Crow'd as he march'd erect with merry cheer,
When, ſudden pierc'd with keen and wild ſurpriſe,
On the dire fox he glanc'd his wand'ring eyes:
Quick through his frame the ſhock electric thrill'd,
And each warm drop around his heart was chill'd;
Check'd inſtant was his ſong, but from his throat
Short and abrupt heav'd many a broken note;
And where's the man ſo bold, that's dead to fear,
When he beholds his mortal foe ſo near?

To fly he wiſh'd, but flattery's blinding art
Nature's juſt fears o'ercame, and gain'd his heart;

Him,

Him, dubious yet, the artful fox addreſs'd,
And with ſoft words the eaſy dupe careſs'd.
" Why does my friend from one to fly prepare,
" Whoſe ſole ambition is his love to ſhare?
" Think not that here as a baſe ſpy I come;
" Pleaſure alone has led me thus from home;
" And, truth if tell I muſt, my longing ear
" Pines ſtill unbleſt, till thy ſweet voice I hear.
" O ſongſter! thou ſo rare, that few can tell
" Whether thou moſt in voice or ſkill excel!
" Thy ſire full well I knew, and the fair dame
" Thy gentle mother, who ſo often came
" In happy days, now paſt, my cot to ſee:
" How bleſt were I, to boaſt the like of thee!
" Gods! how I us'd with raptur'd joy to run
" Inſtant as e'er his matin gay begun!
" How oft, e'en now, I think his voice I hear!
" And liſt fix'd breathleſs with delighted ear;
" And ſure but from thyſelf ne'er mortal heard
" So ſweet a carol from ſo blith a bird.
" Then, when he will'd to reach his ſhrilleſt note,
" How wink'd his eyes, how ſtretch'd his taper throat!
" That far the reſt above the well-known ſound
" Pierc'd ev'ry ear the wide-ſpread hamlet round.

" Then

" Then grant, dear friend, my prayer without delay,
" And the vaſt powers of thy ſweet voice diſplay."
Pleas'd with his ſpeech, his flapping wings atteſt
The riſing joys, that flutter'd in his breaſt;
And ſay, ye great ones, have not oft ye found
Deſigning flatterers in your courts abound?
Yet, though ye know them, ſtill ye lend your ear,
And, deaf to honeſt truth, their pois'nous tales ye hear.
Now 'gan the cock, ſtretch'd on his toes, to riſe,
And, as he crow'd, clos'd faſt his piercing eyes:
Unguarded then the villain ſeiz'd his prey,
And bleeding bore him to the woods away.
Ah, ſtubborn deſtiny! from whoſe decree
Fatal and fix'd nor men nor gods are free.
Oh! hapleſs Chanticleer, lamented bird,
Oh! had the counſels of thy wife been heard!
On that dire day too the ſad deed befel,
Sacred to her thou lov'dſt, ſweet bird, ſo well!
To Venus, pleaſure's queen, the lovely power,
Who of thy life rul'd each luxurious hour!
Oh! were I bleſs'd with the ſweet plaintive art,
Which wrung with pity's pangs each bleeding heart,
When

When * *Geofrey* ſung, and he, fair England's pride,
(On Friday too) great *Cœur de Lion* died;
Then, vile diſhonour'd day! thy foul diſgrace
Not e'er returning ages ſhould efface;
But earth's remoteſt verge in tears relate
The gallant Chanticleer's diſaſtrous fate.
Not with ſuch cries did Simois' ſhores reſound,
When Ilion's towers ſunk proſtrate to the ground;

* Geofrey.—He alludes to a paſſage in the Nova Poetria of Geofrey de Vinſauf, publiſhed not long after the death of Richard I. In this work the author has not only given inſtructions for compoſing in the different ſtyles of poetry, but alſo examples. His ſpecimen of the plaintive kind of compoſition begins thus:

Neuſtria, ſub clypeo regis defenſa Richardi,
Indefenſa modo, geſtu teſtare dolorem.
Exundent oculi lachrymas; exterminet ora
Pallor; connodet digitos tortura; cruentet
Interiora dolor & verberet æthera clamor:
Tota peris ex morte ſua. Mors non fuit ejus,
Sed tua; non una, ſed publica mortis origo.
O! Veneris lachrymoſa dies! O! ſydus amarum!
Illa dies tua nox fuit, et Venus illa venenum.
Illa dedit vulnus, &c.

Theſe lines are ſufficient to ſhew the object and the propriety of Chaucer's ridicule. The whole poem is printed in Leyſer's Hiſt. Po. Med. Ævi, p. 862—978.

TYRWHITT, ver. 15353.

Not

Not ſo the Trojan dames their lord deplor'd,
When Priam fell, by Pyrrhus' vengeful ſword,
As did the hens, when, pierc'd with poignant grief,
Torn from their ſight they view'd their captur'd chief.
But who ſhall tell what direr woes poſſeſs'd
The tender Partlet's agonizing breaſt?
Such felt great Aſdrubal's immortal dame,
Ere that ſhe leap'd indignant on the flame,
Which, when proud Rome o'erthrew her rival foe,
Wrapp'd hapleſs Carthage in one waſte of woe.
Rous'd by the noiſe, almoſt of ſenſe bereft,
Her wheel unheeded now the widow left,
Forth from within her nimbler daughters flew,
When the dire cauſe of uproar ſoon they view;
But, ah! too late; the thief ſteals faſt away,
And on his back bears home his hopeleſs prey.
Yet loud they whoop'd, and after him they ran,
And with huge ſtaves, and panting, many a man;
The dogs, Bounce, Smut, and Hector, join'd the band,
And Malkin, all unpinn'd, with diſtaff in her hand.
The cow and calf ran too, the very hogs,
So ſcared by the barking of the dogs,

And

And by the ſhouting of the rabble crew,
Ran, as their hearts they would have burſt in two.
The geeſe for fear flew ſcreaming o'er the trees,
Out of the hive came the whole ſwarm of bees;
So hideous was the din, that not Jack Straw,
Nor his wild rout, in deſpight of all law,
Made ſuch dire uproar, nor ſhouts half ſo ſhrill,
As thoſe who ran the caitif fox to kill:
Horns of all ſhapes, each inſtrument of noiſe,
Of bone, or braſs, the boiſt'rous ſport of boys,
Swell'd the harſh peal, that made each heart to quake,
And forc'd high Heav'n's wide-echoing arch to ſhake.
But oft her wheel capricious Fortune ſhifts,
And oft to bliſs unhop'd the wretch ſhe lifts.
The cock borne captive by his hungry foe,
Doom'd, as he thought, to ſure and hopeleſs woe,
Him thus addreſs'd—" A gallant fox were I,
" Me ne'er, unheard, ſhould ſuch rude ſhouts defy:
" This I would tell them all, the cock is mine,
" Nor will I e'er my lawful prey reſign."
Pleas'd with the bold ſuggeſtion, round he turns,
And while his heart with conſcious proweſs burns,
His mouth he opes to ſpeak, when ſtraight in view
High on a tree the cock in rapture flew.

The

The fox, when now he found his prey was loſt,
And that ſuperior craft his wiles had croſt,
" Sir Cock," he ſays, " I fear you thought me rude,
" That I unaſk'd ſhould in your yard intrude.
" But, if you'll deign come down, I'll ſoon explain,
" That all your fears of me were weak and vain."
" Pardon, ſweet Fox, if I your prayer refuſe;
" The neck, once 'ſcap'd, may well beware the nooſe.
" What fool were I, if twice your wiles deceive,
" And if again your flatteries I believe!
" Henceforth ſmooth words experienc'd I'll deſpiſe,
" Nor e'er again will ſing, and wink my eyes:
" For ah! how ſenſeleſs, weak, and fond is he,
" Who idly winks his eyes, when he ſhould ſee!"
" Nor truſt me," quoth the fox, " is he leſs wrong,
" Who knows not, when 'tis time to hold his tongue."
Taught by this fable, with attention view,
What fatal ills from flattery enſue;
A cock and fox are ſubjects of the tale,
But the ſame faults alike in men prevail;
'Tis for their uſe the moral page is penn'd,
And bleſt are they, who firſt their faults amend.
" Thanks,"

" Thanks," ſaid the Hoſt, " good prieſt, at all our hands,
" Thy gay and pointed tale of right demands.
" Ah! what a pity 'tis that powers like thine
" Should uſeleſs lie, like diamonds in a mine!
" That thou ſhould'ſt ſlight, reſtrain'd by ſenſeleſs vows,
" That firſt great law, to which all nature bows!
" For well, my friend, by various ſigns 'tis ſhewn,
" That love's fair queen hath mark'd thee for her own.
" Thy gifts are matchleſs, and, were ſuch thy will,
" None ſhould ſo well her ſoft beheſts fulfil;
" E'en thine own cock to thee in feats ſhould yield,
" And, when with thee compar'd, ſhould quit the field;
" Not ſeven hens only ſhould thy virtues prove,
" But ſeven, and ſeven twice told ſhould court thy love.
" Behold what limbs! how brawny! vaſt of ſize!
" And, like a ſparhawk's, dart thy piercing eyes!
" Nor e'er from home vermilion need'ſt thou ſeek,
" Such unbought hues bedeck thy roſy cheek.
" But for thy tale our thanks once more receive,
" And now ſome other ſhall thy poſt relieve."

THE

THE

SECOND NUN'S TALE.

TO 'ſcape the bonds inſidious Sloth prepares,
To rouſe th' awaken'd ſoul to worthier cares,
To ſhun the paths to hateful vice that lead,
And active virtue's nobler heights to tread;
To this man's great and godlike powers invite,
And ſelf-approving joys ſuch toils requite.
When the foul fiend hath mark'd his deſtin'd prey,
And once hath ſeen him yielding to his ſway,
Inſtant his thouſand cords around he ſpreads,
And o'er his head Lethean dews he ſheds;
Till tame, and torpid, his degenerate ſoul,
Dead to fair fame, and virtue's ſweet controul,
And each keen ſenſe extinct, kind nature gave,
He ſinks, a helpleſs, heartleſs, hopeleſs ſlave.
And ſhould grim death awhile his prayers appeaſe,
And ſhould he ſtill delay his prey to ſeize,
How poor, how joyleſs is the fleeting hour
Won from the tyrant's ſtern reſiſtleſs power,

If the fair ſeaſon of the ſhort reprieve
No fruits of lovely virtue e'er relieve!
And ah! how mean, how brutal are the joys,
When the dead ſenſe the qualm of ſurfeit cloys,
And the ſhort ſpace allow'd by pitying Heaven,
Which ſoft indulgence ſpares, to ſloth is given!
To bid frail youth of ills like theſe beware,
A taſk well worth the moral muſe's care,
Here ſhe hath fair tranſcrib'd th' inſtructive page,
That holds a pattern rare to every age,
And gives divine Cecilia's deathleſs name,
To ſhine unrival'd in the rolls of fame.
Come, thou fair form! divine, myſterious maid!
And lend, O! lend, benign thy puiſſant aid,
Leſt I in words unmeet and mean relate
Thy honour'd vot'ry's ſad, diſaſt'rous fate!
O thou! whoſe ſoul ſo ſpotleſs, chaſte, and pure,
Could e'en thy Maker's piercing ſearch endure!
Thou! from whoſe loins high Heaven's Almighty King
Ordain'd his own eternal ſon to ſpring;
He, whom both heaven, and earth, and ſeas proclaim,
And (ſo the Eternal will'd) at whoſe high name
Each knee ſhould lowly bow, creation's Lord,
By ſaints and ſeraphs worſhip'd and ador'd;

Full

Full though of every power and grace divine,
Yet did his glories in thy womb enſhrine,
And, to avert loſt man's eternal doom,
Deign'd e'en his nature frail himſelf aſſume.
O thou! by God's approving voice decreed
The bleſt aſſiſtant in the mighty deed!
Thou in whoſe ſoul each heavenly grace combines,
In whom o'er all diſtinguiſh'd mercy ſhines;
Who not content thy healing aid to lend,
When miſery's cries implore a pitying friend,
Doſt oft unaſk'd delight her wounds to bind,
And bidd'ſt ſoft comfort 'ſuage her tortur'd mind!
Oh! on thy vot'ry, though the leaſt and laſt,
Deign with benignant ſmile thine eye to caſt;
Think on the faith of her, who erſt implor'd
Crums from the table of her heavenly Lord,
Such as e'en dogs were wont; and, oh! inſpire
Me, though unworthy, with thy chaſtening fire;
Quick on my ſoul ſublim'd thy grace impart!
Purge each impure affection from my heart!
That not one ſpeck of earthly droſs remain,
My juſt recital's ſpotleſs truth to ſtain!
In Rome the maid was born, of noble blood,
And Chriſt's pure love her mind betimes imbued;

To him each day her ardent vows ſhe paid,
And earneſt begg'd to live a ſpotleſs maid:
Meantime, obedient to her ſire's command,
To a fond youth ſhe duteous gives her hand;
And while in honour of the ſpouſal rite
Soft muſic fills each heart with ſweet delight,
Trembling to Heaven her tearful eyes aſcend;
And while her knees in warm devotion bend,
Once more ſhe dares her Saviour's grace implore,
To grant her prayer, preferr'd ſo oft before.

Now, with her ſpouſe retir'd, her troubled breaſt
Pour'd forth its load, and him ſhe thus addreſs'd:
" O! huſband beſt belov'd! O! virtuous youth!
" If, as I deem, the voice of honour'd truth
" Is ſacred to thy ſoul, thy wond'ring ear
" With mute attention, what I tell, ſhall hear.
" Know then, an angel on my ſteps attends,
" And from each danger ſure protection lends:
" But my chaſte vow's fix'd purpoſe to maintain,
" To guard me ſafe from dire defilement's ſtain;
" This is his care; and thus hath Heaven decreed,
" That the bold man, who atchieves the hated deed,
" And dares my virgin innocence deſpoil,
" On him ſhall vengeanceu nappeas'd recoil.

" If

" If ſuch thy wiſh, the impious wiſh reſtrain,
" And ſafe from death and pure from guilt remain."
Aw'd by her words, and check'd by chaſtening fear,
He firſt demands the angel to appear,
And on theſe terms he plights his ſacred word,
That to her wiſh his will ſhall next accord.
" Youth lov'd moſt dear," the raptur'd maid replies,
" Since thus thou ſay'ſt, ſoon ſhall thy gladden'd eyes
" The form divine behold: but here I claim,
" That thou ſhalt then revere the honour'd name
" Of Chriſt our Lord, and on his words believe,
" And thou ſhalt baptiſm's holy rite receive.
" Thee from the walls the Appian way ſhall lead,
" And, ere thy footſteps three ſhort miles proceed,
" Thine eyes ſhall there deſcry a homely cot,
" Where ſouls devout reſide, though mean their lot.
" Tell them, Cecilia bade thee haſte from Rome,
" And to the holy ſaint, old Urban, come:
" Him when thou ſeeſt, thy journey's cauſe unfold,
" And, when abſolv'd from ſin, as here I've told,
" Thy wond'ring eyes the angel ſhall behold."
Now to the place preſcrib'd Valerian came,
And, as inſtructed by his lovely dame,

Urban among the lonely tombs he found,
Muſing with eyes fix'd ſtedfaſt on the ground:
His meſſage told, enraptur'd to the ſkies,
The hoary ſaint uplifts his feeble eyes;
Tears of pure joy his holy zeal atteſt,
And paint the warm emotions in his breaſt.
"O Jeſu!" then he cries, "how bleſt I ſee
"The ſeed of grace expand, that's ſown by thee!
"Of thee divine Cecilia, gracious Lord,
"The boon of ſpotleſs chaſtity implor'd;
"Yet not confin'd to her pure breaſt alone,
"It warms her huſband's boſom, as her own;
"Spite of her charms, no leſs than youthful blood,
"See nature's ſtrong deſires by faith ſubdued!"
Scarce had he ſpoke, when fair before their ſight
An aged man appear'd in veſture bright.
The youth amaz'd, and wond'ring to behold
Rais'd in his hand a book with words of gold,
Down lifeleſs ſinks: but ſoon diſpell'd his fears,
The man theſe words aloud to read he hears:
"One Lord, one Faith, one Power, whom God we call,
"Father of life and light, ſupreme o'er all."

This

This doſt thou firm believe? the man demands:
The youth conſent expreſs'd with uplift hands.
This done, the viſion fled; with decent care
Now Urban bids for baptiſm's rite prepare,
And to Valerian grants the myſtic ſign,
The ſacred ſymbol of each grace divine.
Now, home return'd, devout with bended knees
(An angel near her) his fair ſpouſe he ſees;
The heavenly form in either hand diſplay'd
A wreath, of lilies fair and roſes made;
Then thus he ſays; "Endued with powers divine,
"Be this fair chaplet, chaſte Cecilia, thine;
"To thee, thrice bleſt Valerian, this is ſent,
"And, with this charge, I the rich gifts preſent.
"Spotleſs and pure your holy vows maintain,
"And theſe ſweet flowers their fragrance ſhall retain:
"Pluck'd from the bower of Paradiſe they came,
"Their bloom through endleſs ages ſtill the ſame;
"Yet ſuch the ſacred pledge, no unchaſte eye
"May e'er their matchleſs beauties hope to ſpy.
"And thou, Valerian! ſince thy docile mind
"So ſoon to counſel's ſober voice inclin'd,
"Aſk what thou wilt"—To whom he quick replied,
"O! be not then this earneſt boon denied!

" A brother's tender love divides my care,
" And each ſoft int'reſt of his ſoul I ſhare.
" Deign then to him the heavenly truth impart,
" And Chriſt's pure love ſhall warm his grateful heart."
" Well," then the angel ſaid, " doth Heaven approve
" Thy pure requital of fraternal love,
" And to you both its kind beheſts accord,
" The deathleſs palm, the martyr's high reward."
Theſe words he ſpoke, when now Tiburtius comes,
And, inſtant raviſh'd with the ſweet perfumes,
" Whence," he exclaims, with ſtrange and warm ſurpriſe,
" Whence do theſe fragrant wondrous ſcents ariſe?
" Not richer odours could my ſenſe relieve,
" Should ſhowers of roſes my full hands receive;
" Soft o'er my raptur'd ſoul new-wak'd I feel
" Delights ne'er felt before, ſo ſweetly ſteal."
" Brother," Valerian ſays, " two chaplets fair,
" Heaven's gifts to us, perfume the fragrant air;
" And as my earneſt prayer has thus prevail'd,
" That with their ſweets thy ſmell ſhould be regal'd,

" So

" So if in Chriſt's pure word thou wilt believe,
" Soon ſhall thy raviſh'd ſight their charms perceive."
" Brother," Tiburtius ſaid, " moſt lov'd, moſt dear!
" Is it a dream or truth that thus I hear?"
" Already now too long," the youth replied,
" Have dreams of darkneſs ſtrove the truth to hide:
" But from this houſe no longer 'tis conceal'd,
" And its clear light to us is now reveal'd."
" Whence has this been?" his faultering voice demands.
" Heaven ſent the gift, and by an angel's hands;
" One whom," Valerian adds, " thyſelf ſhalt ſee,
" When thy purg'd ſoul ſhall once from ſin be free:
" But vile idolatry thou firſt muſt leave,
" Ere thou canſt truth's enlightening beams receive."
Then to his opening reaſon's clearer view
Cecilia ſhews, how groundleſs and untrue
Is the vain hope, to which fond man 's ſo prone,
To truſt in idols, gods of wood or ſtone;
To be of deaf and ſenſeleſs ſtocks afraid,
The grim and ghaſtly forms himſelf hath made.
" I feel thy ſuaſive words," Tiburtius cries,
" And henceforth every idol I deſpiſe."

Warm'd

Warm'd with pure joy, to her enraptur'd breaſt
The happy convert chaſte Cecilia preſs'd;
"Brother indeed," ſhe ſays, "by grace allied!
"Firm to thy love behold thy ſiſter tied!
"Forth inſtant go, in ſteady faith ſecure,
"And when thou'rt purg'd by baptiſm's waters pure,
"Then ſhall the angel thy glad eyes behold,
"Of whoſe bleſt deeds Valerian erſt hath told.
"But duly firſt to what I teach attend—
"Whene'er this ſhort and fleeting life ſhall end,
"A life of hopes ſublimer ſhall begin,
"Unvex'd with care, and undefil'd by ſin:
"This truth hath God's eternal Son diſplay'd,
"He, by whoſe wondrous power the worlds were made."
Then to his liſtening ears did ſhe explain
Whate'er the ſacred books of life contain,
God's pitying grace, redemption's mighty plan,
And Chriſt's unbounded love to hopeleſs man.
This done, to holy Urban he repairs,
Who, ere the rite of baptiſm, well prepares,
By culture's ſtrengthening aid, the docile youth
T' imbibe the graces of eternal truth.

Now

Now day by day delighted Urban ſees
His opening mind expand by juſt degrees,
Sees with what joy, when th' angel bleſt appears,
Divine inſtruction from his lips he hears.
But now the time is come, that's doom'd to prove
How firm in Chriſt his faith, how pure his love.
Him and Valerian ſoon ſtern mandates call
Before the image of great Jove to fall;
Worſhip or die, the harſh decrees enjoin.
Rather than this, death's keeneſt pangs be mine,
They both unmov'd exclaim; and now they heard
The judge pronounce the dread and dire award.
But their pure zeal ſo mov'd the ſoften'd mind
Of the ſtern guards, to whom they were conſign'd,
That pitying firſt, they ſoon with patient ear
Yielded the doctrines of their faith to hear;
Renounc'd at length their ſins, with heartfelt ſhame,
And firm believ'd in Jeſus' holy name.
Meantime Cecilia to her friends repairs,
And with them joins devout in humble prayers:
Prieſts too ſhe brings, who, 'mid the gloom of night,
Admit the convert guards to baptiſm's rite.
The morn arriv'd, with warm and earneſt care
Cecilia bids them for their taſk prepare,

Bids

Bids them from earth their brighter hopes remove,
And fix them on their ſure rewards above.
" Adieu," ſhe cries—The guards, when this ſhe ſaid,
Their priſoners forth to Jove's high altar led;
There having each refus'd his vows to pay,
To death their necks they yield without delay.
The tender Maximus, to whoſe command
The Prefect had conſign'd th' attendant band,
Saw through mid air their parting ſouls aſcend,
And crowds of angels on their flight attend:
This he to all with dauntleſs tongue declar'd,
And for his zeal the law's dire vengeance ſhar'd.
On him Cecilia burial's rites conferr'd,
And near the martyr brothers him interr'd.
Her pious cares awake the Prefect's rage,
And means, her zeal to check, his thoughts engage;
The holy maid he bids before him ſtand,
And to his gods, with undiſſembling hand,
Accuſtom'd incenſe throw—" And dread," he cries,
" The doom that waits the wretch, that this denies."
Then long and various queſtions he propounds,
Aſks of her novel faith's fallacious grounds.
" Know'ſt thou my power?" he ſays. With firm reply,
" All thou canſt do," ſhe anſwers, " I defy;

" Man's

" Man's puny power is feeble and confin'd,
" An unſubſtantial bladder ſwoln with wind;
" A needle's point betrays the empty boaſt,
" Pierce but the ſurface, and in air 'tis loſt."
" But well thou know'ſt, great Cæſar's laws proclaim
" Avow'd abhorrence to the Chriſtian name."
" Tyrants, I know, to truth's fair dictates blind,
" In pureſt innocence oft guilt will find;
" Thus peaceful Chriſtians now your fears engage,
" And war unjuſt againſt our faith ye wage:
" But war, and threats, and death's dire pangs are vain,
" For firmt hat faith, I hold, I will maintain."
Stung with her taunts, freſh anger fires his eye,
" Caſt inſtant incenſe," fierce he ſpeaks, " or die!"
Calmly his rage ſhe anſwers with a ſmile,
" Think not, ſuch threats can e'er my faith beguile!"
" O wretch," he ſays, " reſtrain'd thine inſults keep,
" And let reluctant vengeance peaceful ſleep:
" Ready, thou know'ſt, the miniſters of fate,
" Marſhall'd in dread array, my mandates wait.
" Ceaſe then, unwiſe, their vengeance to deride,
" Nor fall th' unpitied victim of thy pride!"
" Pride,"

" Pride," ſhe replies, " our humble laws diſdain;
" But the firm words of honeſt truth are plain.
" What if by thee to torturing death decreed,
" Before the altars of thy gods I bleed!
" There ends thy power; above thy ſtern controul
" Are the pure feelings of th' immortal ſoul;
" Unhurt th' impaſſive ſpirit wings her way
" To the bright regions of eternal day."
" Peace, peace, fond wretch," he cries, " revile no more
" The honour'd gods, the ſons of Rome adore!"
" O! would kind Heaven, with waken'd warmth, ſhe cries,
" Tear the thick film from thy benighted eyes!
" Then thou at length the ſimpleſt truths might'ſt learn,
" And ſee, what eyes of infants can diſcern,
" That the huge form to which ſuch thouſands bend,
" To which a blinded nation's vows aſcend,
" Ere the ſharp axe transform'd the ſhapeleſs wood,
" A lofty oak in yon tall foreſt ſtood.
" Should the hard block, which now a God they call,
" On the cruſh'd hand of ſome ſad vot'ry fall,

" See

" See though he will not, feel he might though blind,
" And mere ſubſtantial ſtone his God would find."
No longer could his rage her taunts endure,
" Here, guards," he cries, " the impious wretch ſe-
cure!
" 'Neath a huge cauldron heap hot coals of fire,
" And in the boiling bath let her expire!"
Prompt his imperious mandates they obey,
And (ſtrange to tell) for a long night and day
She all unhurt amid the flames remain'd,
And ne'er e'en once of torturing heat complain'd.
This but increas'd the baffled Prefect's ſpite,
And off her head he bids his ſlaves to ſmite.
Obedient to his word her neck ſhe bends,
And thrice with fruitleſs ſtroke the axe deſcends;
Unſever'd it remains—to end her woe,
The law forbids again to aim the blow.
Three days the pangs of torture ſhe ſurviv'd,
Ere death, affliction's friend, at length arriv'd;
Daily, while Heaven her ſuffering life prolong'd,
To their lov'd ſaint the weeping Chriſtians throng'd;
And as around her, drown'd in grief, they ſtood,
And with their kerchiefs ſtaunch'd the flowing blood,

Still,

Still, though her ſoul pain's keeneſt anguiſh wrung,
She pour'd divine inſtruction from her tongue.
Releas'd, her patient ſufferings to requite,
Urban perform'd interment's ſolemn rite;
Her houſe, her dying gift, a church became,
And ſtill preſerv'd Cecilia's honour'd name;
And daily there by kneeling crowds are paid
Unfeign'd devotions to the martyr'd maid.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO

THE CANON'S YEOMAN'S TALE.

CECILIA's tale now clos'd, to Boughton town,
Scarce half a mile, the cavalcade had gone,
When them a man o'ertook, in ſable clad,
Who 'neath a ruſty coat a ſurplice had:
Three miles at leaſt full ſpeed he muſt have rode,
So ſweat his panting ſteed beneath his load;
His lackey's leaner jade, ſtill more bedew'd,
Could not have further e'en one ſtep purſued:
What had its colour been no eye deſcried,
Plaiſter'd with foam, 'twas like a leopard pied,
Such ſpots of various hues emboſs'd its hide.
A lank portmanteau, charg'd with ſlender ſtore,
On his ſharp croupe's unfurniſh'd ridge he bore.
What could the maſter be, I wond'ring ſtood,
When by his cloak, firm faſten'd to his hood,
And by his black attire, 'twas clear to ſee,
That our new friend ſome canon grave muſt be.

Dangling behind his ſorry beaver hung,
Which by a lace around his neck was ſlung;
An old and dingy kerchief in its ſtead
Receiv'd the copious dew-drops from his head,
Which ſmoak'd with reeking ſteam, though cloſely ſhorn,
Like a new dunghill in a winter's morn.
" Gentles," he ſaid, " Heaven ſave you all, I cry;
" I've puſh'd full hard to bear you company."
" Ay," ſaid his groom, " myſelf at peep of day
" Saw you, great ſirs, ſet forward on your way,
" And inſtant to take horſe my lord adviſ'd,
" For well, I knew, good fellowſhip he priz'd."
" Friend," ſaid our Hoſt, " thy maſter, I'll engage,
" Is deep in learned lore, diſcreet, and ſage.
" But is his mind with lighter fancies ſtor'd?
" Can he, doſt think, ſome pleaſant tale afford?"
" Ay, can he well—and could'ſt thou, friend, like me,
" Daily the proofs of his vaſt talents ſee,
" His potent deeds thy ſenſes would amaze,
" And thou would'ſt on him rapt in wonder gaze.
" Full well, though now he mean and homely ſeem,
" Would'ſt thou, when tried, his friendly aid eſteem."

" Is

" Is he a clerk ?" " A clerk !—ay, far more great.
" Come near, and of him I will more relate.
" Such power he has (but this too ſhould be ſaid,
" That he ne'er wonders works without my aid)
" That all this chalky ground, on which we ride,
" And all to our journey's deſtin'd end beſide,
" Such were his will (but keep what here I've told)
" He could upturn, and pave with ſhining gold."
" Bleſs me !" our Hoſt replies, " if this be ſo,
" Why does thy lord in ſuch vile tatters go ?
" For through his clothes his very ſkin is ſpied,
" Which, if he gold could find, he ſure would hide."
" Friend," ſaid the lackey, " if I truth confeſs,
" I needs muſt ſay, myſelf have thought no leſs;
" But 'tis a fact not rare, that deepeſt wits
" Are leaſt attentive to what all befits;
" And thoſe abſorb'd in ſtudies moſt abſtruſe,
" Are oft too wiſe to practiſe things of uſe."
" My queries," ſaid our Hoſt, " I pray forgive,
" And farther tell me, how and where you live."
Pauſing awhile, he ſmil'd, and thus replied:
" From thee, my pleaſant friend, I nought will hide.
" Where we have liv'd, in truth, 'tis hard to ſay,
" For we our holes have ſhifted every day;

" Chief in the ſuburbs of ſome crowded town,
" 'Mong rogues, whoſe deeds of darkneſs, like our own,
" Hate the broad glare of penetrating light,
" And court the ſhelter of all-conſcious night."
Our Hoſt then, ſtaring full with quaint grimace,
" But wherefore ſo diſcolour'd is thy face?"
With earneſt tone exclaims. " My face," he cried,
" May well with theſe unſeemly ſpots be dyed;
" And ſo would thine, my merry friend, I trow,
" Didſt thou all night, like me, hot cinders blow.
" My lot 's to pore inceſſant o'er the fire,
" Though oft we miſs the fruits, we moſt deſire;
" Now 'tis too cold, and now as much too hot,
" And, after all our toils, ſtill nought is got;
" For ſcience coy we find, and hard to woo,
" Still far ſhe flies, the faſter we purſue,
" And, unleſs ſoon o'erta'en, all hopes are paſt,
" And our ſad boon will be to ſtarve at laſt."
Now did the canon by degrees draw near,
Intent the ſubſtance of their talk to hear;
For this great Cato's maxims ſage decide,
Guilt and ſuſpicion ever near reſide.

" Raſcal!"

" Raſcal!" he cries, " ſo loud to prate deſiſt,
" Or thou ſhalt feel the vengeance of my fiſt."
" Ne'er mind his threats," our jolly Hoſt replied,
" But with thy tale proceed, as on we ride."
Embolden'd now, " I will," the lackey ſaid;
—Of dire detection now himſelf afraid,
The canon turns his horſe without delay,
And back with quicken'd pace directs his way.
The groom, when now he ſaw his maſter gone,
Smil'd, as well pleas'd, and ſpoke with firmer tone:
" O firſt, O prince of ſharpers! there thou goeſt!
" Too long, alas! I've known thee to my coſt!
" May Heaven's choice curſes on thy ſteps attend!
" My long and painful ſervice here ſhall end.
" And now, my friends," he ſays, " you all ſhall hear
" What I've as yet but whiſper'd in one ear;
" Fully the knaviſh arts I will unfold,
" Of the dark myſtery of making gold."

THE

CANON'S YEOMAN'S TALE.

SEVEN years are gone and paſs'd, ſince with this man
My hard and thriftleſs ſervice firſt began;
Then oft he promis'd, ſhortly to impart
The gainful ſecrets of his wondrous art:
But all that in ſeven years to me is known,
Is that, as each advanc'd, I've poorer grown.
Ere him I ſerv'd, I liv'd content and gay,
And was on Sundays clad in neat array;
Not worn to ſkin and bone, I then was ſleek,
And health and vigour bloom'd upon my cheek:
Now pale and ſickly is my ſhrivel'd ſkin,
And as I'm wan without, I'm ſad within;
Blear'd with the ſcalding fumes is either eye,
Nor one ſoft ſolace of my griefs I ſpy;
And ſtill to make my ſad misfortunes worſe,
I feel the added weight of debt's dire curſe:
My former dreams, too bright to be withſtood,
Urg'd me to borrow caſh, where'er I could;

This

This marks with growing gloom each bitter day,
For how can e'er I hope my debts to pay?
Warn'd then by me, henceforth of frauds beware,
Nor truſt in Alchemy's deceitful ſnare!
For many are they, who once themſelves deceiv'd,
Wiſh by their friends the fraud to be believ'd,
And, leſt their folly meet its well-earn'd ſhame,
Strive to decoy their neighbours to the ſame.
But if ye now will lend a patient ear,
Ye the whole proceſs of the craft ſhall hear.
When for our mighty work we now prepare,
Perch'd on each brow ſevere ſits cloudy care;
Firſt our myſterious books are wide diſplay'd,
And each fit utenſil in order laid;
Then with my breath, ſad taſk! I blow the fire,
Till choak'd with ſmoke my lungs can ſcarce reſpire.
Firſt we of ſilver due proportions take,
Then we the bones of beaſts or burn, or bake;
With theſe ſteel duſt and orpiment combine,
And mix the maſs, and grind to powder fine;
Then in an earthen pot 'tis plac'd with care,
On which a lamp of glaſs excludes the air.
But ſalt and pungent pepper, be it known,
Muſt in the empty veſſel firſt be thrown.

How ſhall I paint the toils, that next enſue?
How ſhall I tell, how oft the coals I blew,
Ere the exact and proper heat prevail'd,
For want of which ſo oft our labours fail'd?
Fain would I tell you; but my ſhallow brain
Cannot the names of half the things retain,
Which the completion of our work demands,
Nor half the painful labours of our hands;
Clay, lime unſlak'd, and mercury call'd crude,
Moonwort, valerian, with ſtrong powers endued;
Brimſtone, and borax, and bol armenic,
Salt petre, vitriol, and arſenic;
Alum, and yeaſt, and nature's very dregs,
Urine, and dung, old rags, and whites of eggs;
Chalk, aſhes, oil, why ſhould I name them all?
Glaſs, ſal ammoniac, and bullock's gall.
Fitly theſe various ſubſtances to uſe,
The proper veſſels from our ſtore we chooſe;
Theſe are of copper, iron, wood, and braſs,
Some made of earth and clay, and ſome of glaſs:
Some ſtraight, ſome curv'd, ſome long, and others ſhort,
Alembic, cucurbite, croſlette, retort;

With

With theſe what works we do, would tire your ear,
Should you but half our operations hear:
Now we amalgamate, ſublime, refine,
And now precipitate, cement, calcine.
But I ſhould this, good ſirs, before have told,
That the prime movers, ſpirits, are fourfold;
Quickſilver firſt, and orpiment the ſecond,
Ammoniac next, and laſt is brimſtone reckon'd.
Rang'd in ſeven claſſes bodies we divide,
To the ſeven planetary orbs allied.
Gold is the glowing ſun's imperial care;
Silver the moon's, leſs precious, but more fair;
The hardy warrior Mars loves iron ſtrong,
To Mercury doth quickſilver belong;
Saturn's ſlow tedious round is well pourtray'd
By the dull properties of heavy lead;
Tin's lighter veins attract etherial Jove,
And copper's ruddy beams the Queen of love.
But, truſt me, he, whom theſe purſuits allure,
Haſtes to dire want with footſtep faſt and ſure;
No purſe, how full ſoe'er, can long ſuffice;
For freſh defeats ſtill call for freſh ſupplies;
Till in the vortex of th' abyſs profound
(Each hope at length extinct) all, all is drown'd.

Nor

Nor boots it, if to wit he make pretence,
Let him but once philoſopher commence,
And, though he learning ne'er ſo warmly love,
He, like the reſt, a very fool ſhall prove.
Friar, or monk, or canon, great, or ſmall,
One ſure and common ruin waits them all.
Now ſhould I tell you, ſirs, what virtues rare,
E'en the pure forms of limpid waters ſhare;
Alexipharmic ſome, ſome cooling deem'd,
Others for powers carminative eſteem'd;
Spirituous ſome, and potent to controul
E'en the warm functions of the active ſoul;
Theſe, form'd the nerves' fine energies to ſteep
In the ſoft fetters of unconſcious ſleep:
Others, again, to rouſe the torpid blood,
And with new warmth bid flow the purple flood.
Why ſhould I add to theſe the nicer toils,
When from ſoft plants we preſs eſſential oils?
Fatigued, I'm ſure, already is each ear,
Nor ſhall ye more of ſuch ſtrange jargon hear.
But I can ne'er, alas! too oft repeat,
What a vile quack'ry, what a ſhameleſs cheat,
Is this ſame ſtone, the grand elixir nam'd,
Falſely the ſource of certain wealth proclaim'd;

For,

For, as I've told you, toil we ne'er ſo hard,
Still, ſtill, we ever miſs our hop'd reward.
Yet is the ſpecious dream ſo deep impreſs'd,
That when they're moſt reduc'd, when moſt diſtreſs'd,
The dupes, to hope's falſe flattering gleams a prey,
Still think deluded that ſome happier day,
Will all their fears and all their cares repay.
And, ſad to ſay, though 'mong the wealthy bred,
So far is now the rank infection ſpread,
That the poor wretch, who on a flock-bed lies,
Whoſe until'd roof ſcarce hides him from the ſkies,
Whoſe thread-bare coat ſcarce his chill'd limbs defends,
When from the ſky the pelting ſtorm deſcends,
Sells his laſt rag, and, warm with faith alone,
Shivering and ſhirtleſs hopes the promis'd ſtone.
Well may, my friends, your conſcious noſes tell
This craft's ſublime profeſſors by their ſmell;
In fumes of brimſtone ſteep'd, a mile around
Their warm and fragrant odours may be found;
And 'tis by this indeed, and by their clothes,
That, who they are, each paſſing ſchool-boy knows.
But, if e'er aſk'd, why they ſo mean appear,
Straight with low voice, cloſe breathing in your ear,
'Tis

'Tis thus, they ſay, they hope their powers to hide,
Which may not ſafely to themſelves be ſpied.
But to proceed—While that our earthen pot,
Plac'd o'er a gentle fire, was waxing hot,
The metals all himſelf our maſter mix'd,
And to each maſs its due proportion fix'd:
And, as he's gone, I boldly now will tell,
What, by experience taught, I know too well;
That though wide round loud fame his powers report,
He of his art's perfection falls full ſhort.
Oft the pot breaks, and on the floor is ſpilt
Each precious drop, on which our hopes are built;
For, when th' impriſon'd fumes with heat expand,
Our walls, too weak their fury to withſtand,
Burſt with loud crack, releas'd the vapours riſe,
And to the roof the lighter ſubſtance flies;
While fus'd the coarſe and denſer dregs below
In whitening ſtreams along the pavement flow.
But, when affairs go thus, the Devil, I ween,
Stands at our elbows, though by us unſeen.
When now our ſhiver'd pot in pieces flies,
Each at the other ſtaring with wild eyes,
In ſolemn ſilence marks his firſt ſurpriſe.

But

But ſilence ſoon to harſh reproach gives way,
Each on the other ſtrives the blame to lay;
Now 'tis on him, who made the fire, beſtow'd;
Now 'tis to him transferr'd, the coals who blow'd;
(That lot, alas! was mine) a third declares,
The maſs ill-temper'd, hence our loſs, he ſwears:
Mark well my words, a fourth ſays, I beſeech,
This was the cauſe, the fire was made of beech.
Our maſter ſaw the fault was paſt repair,
And henceforth firm reſolv'd to take more care;
But to his men, to end the broil, thus ſpoke:
" Ere we began," he ſays, " the pot was broke.
" Ne'er be caſt down, but greater caution uſe,
" When for our work you next the veſſels chooſe.
" Be it your preſent care the floor to ſweep,
" Then pick the larger fragments from the heap;
" Let the ſmall remnant through a ſieve be paſs'd,
" Thus from the wreck ſhall ſome be ſav'd at laſt."
" Ay," one replies, more ſanguine than the reſt,
" The life of man's a lottery at beſt.
" Thwarted, 'tis true, at preſent are our pains,
" Yet we ſee ſomething from our loſs remains.
" But who's ſo bold to hope, that fair ſucceſs,
" Uncheck'd, unvaried, will his labours' bleſs?

" Now

" Now clouds the ſky deform, anon appears
" The glorious ſun, and ſoon the proſpect cheers:
" The merchant's hope oft raging tempeſts ſweep
" To the dark chambers of the foaming deep:
" But oftener far ſmooth ſeas and gentler gales
" Waft to their deſtin'd port the ſwelling ſails."
" Next time," our maſter ſays, " we ſure ſhall ſpeed;
" I'll take all blame, if then we don't ſucceed.
" To me our failure's ſelf is proof moſt ſtrong,
" That ſomething, heaven knows what, muſt have been wrong."
And thus it ever is; though when we're met,
And round in deep debate are gravely ſet,
We preach ſo wiſely on our favourite theme,
You'd each at leaſt a Solomon eſteem;
Though we're too apt this truth in ſcorn to hold,
That all that gaily gliſters is not gold;
Nor hath leſs oft mature experience found,
The fruit that faireſt ſeem'd the moſt unſound:
Thus, if us ſons of ſcience ye would prove,
'Tis fit our varniſh'd maſks ye firſt remove;
Then fair before your eyes would ſtand confeſs'd
A train of empty ſenſeleſs knaves at beſt.

That

That this no ſlander is, will plain appear,
When ye the ſubſtance of my tale ſhall hear.
Firſt of our troop this reverend Canon ſtood,
Keen too he was, and every thing but good;
For, truth to ſay, upon all England's ground
A villain more complete could not be found:
So fine 's his art, that none his ſnares ſuſpect;
His guile, like ſecret poiſons, might infect
E'en a whole region round, and ſoon deſtroy,
By more than Grecian fraud, a ſecond Troy.
Yet faithleſs, like himſelf, hath lying fame
Fill'd the deluded country with his name.
But let not what I ſay offend your ear,
Ye who by chance are of his order here:
By cenſures harſh I mean not all to wrong;
Some worthleſs brethren, well I know, belong
To every rank alike; the holy band,
By Chriſt ordain'd to ſpread through every land
God's grace to man, one traitor baſe contain'd,
Yet by his guilt were ne'er the Apoſtles ſtain'd.
So if your convent ſome vile prieſt diſgrace,
Safely and ſoon the ſtain ye may efface;
Quick from the reſt th' infected limb remove,
And clear to all your purer ſoundneſs prove.

In

In days of yore a prieſt in London liv'd,
And well by all belov'd he there had thriv'd;
So high at length in favour he was grown,
His hoſteſs bade him think her houſe his own:
All bounteous ſhe, not clothes alone and board,
But caſh, whene'er he wanted, would afford.
While at the lodgings of his generous dame,
To him one day a knaviſh canon came,
"Lend me, good friend, one ſingle mark," he ſaid,
"And in three days at moſt it ſhall be paid."
Alert the friendly prieſt the favour grants,
And counts, without delay, the caſh he wants;
Which kept two days, right faithful to his word,
Again the canon brings it on the third.
The prieſt, of manners ſoft, and generous mind,
(Well pleas'd withal his caſh return'd to find)
Thus kindly ſpeaks: "Indeed, my worthy friend,
"'Tis with true heart-felt joy that aid I lend
"To thoſe, like thee, who plighted faith obſerve,
"And ne'er from what they promiſe, baſely ſwerve;
"Gladly with thee again I'll ſhare my ſtore,
"And, did thy need require, would lend thee more."

"Favours

"Favours like thine," he ſays, "ſo prompt and kind,
"Stamp with impreſſions deep my grateful mind;
"And 'tis with joy ſincere and warm delight,
"I feel my power thy friendſhip to requite:
"Lo! then, 'tis mine ſucceſsful to explore
"The hidden depths of philoſophic lore;
"And I'll impart to thee, if ſuch thy will,
"Each latent myſtery, and all my ſkill."
Whate'er he ſaid, the eaſy prieſt believ'd,
And with freſh joy the proffer'd boon receiv'd.
This canon, gentle ſirs, if right I ween,
Ye've all ſuppos'd my maſter to have been:
That he by chance was not, though all agree,
Mine 's, to the full, as great a rogue as he;
And, truth to ſay, ſuch knaviſh tricks I've known,
That ſuch a maſter I've oft bluſh'd to own;
And bluſh I fain would now, but every roſe
Muſt leave his cheeks, who coals and cinders blows.
But to the canon now once more attend:
"Firſt," to the prieſt he ſays, "your ſervant ſend,
"Of quickſilver three ounces to procure,
"From which pure metal I'll in change enſure."

The quickſilver procur'd, his work to aid
He next requeſts that near him coals be laid;
Then from his boſom a croſslette he took,
And ſtaring ſolemn with myſterious look,
" Take this," he cries, " and put thyſelf therein
" One ounce of quickſilver, and here begin
" Of deep philoſophy thy grand career;
" Soon thou in ſcience ſhalt have no compeer.
" From every eye my art's deep craft I hide;
" To thee, whoſe love hath been ſo nobly tried;
" To thee alone its ſecrets I confide.
" Soon from this quickſilver thy wond'ring eyes
" Shall ſee a metal pure and perfect riſe:
" Wrought by this powder is the mighty change,
" Endued with powers occult, and paſſing ſtrange.
" But to thyſelf alone I muſt impart
" The ſacred ſecrets of the wondrous art:
" Firſt then the ſervant thou muſt ſend away,
" Ere the myſterious proceſs I diſplay."
The man retir'd, he bids the prieſt with care
For the new duties of his poſt prepare:
Coals firſt he tells him round the pan to heap,
Steady and equal next the heat to keep;

Then,

Then, on his docile pupil to impoſe,
He in the pan his boaſted powder throws:
This, chalk or duſt, was uſeleſs but to blind
With ſhew of myſtery th' obſerver's mind.
"Soon," ſays the canon, "will our work ſucceed,
"And thine own hands," he cries, "ſhall do the deed."
Pleas'd with theſe words, the prieſt the fire renews,
And with freſh zeal his heating toils purſues.
"Let me awhile thy taſk ſevere relieve;
"To ſee thee ſweat ſo ſore, I truly grieve;
"Here take this handkerchief," the canon ſaid,
"And wipe thy face, and dry thy reeking head."
This while he did, long in his hood conceal'd,
Sly in his hand a coal the canon held;
In it, before he came, a hole was drill'd,
And the void ſpace an ounce of ſilver fill'd.
This done, with wax he well the hole ſecur'd,
And thus to his baſe plot ſucceſs inſur'd.
Now, while the other wip'd his dewy face,
He watch'd the favouring moment, right to place
This coal among the reſt, then hard he blew,
And the rais'd ſparks high to the ceiling flew.

Then in the pan, with ſemblance dark, he peeps,
Then round the edge anew the coals he heaps;
"Now let ſome drink," he ſays, "our toils requite,
"And ſet thy heart at reſt, for all goes right."
Ere long the flames had reach'd the canon's coal,
The ſoften'd wax ſoon melted from the hole;
Then unconfin'd the ſilver trickling ran
In a pure ſhining ſtream within the pan.
When this the canon ſaw, he quickly cries,
"Now, good ſir prieſt, prepare to feaſt your eyes!
"But you muſt firſt a lump of chalk prepare,
"Which ſmooth and nicely cut, and ſcoop'd with care,
"Muſt better tools ſupply; for much I fear,
"No proper mould for ingots can be here.
"But, that thyſelf may the whole proceſs ſee,
"And of each ſtep minute a witneſs be,
"I'll with thee go; the fire may ſafely burn,
"If but the door be lock'd, till our return."
Soon, for his purpoſe fit, he found ſome chalk,
And while he held the prieſt in earneſt talk,
Forth from his ſleeve, but well conceal'd from view,
A wedge of ſilver the ſly canon drew;
Its weight an ounce: by this the chalk he cut,
Then in his ſleeve again the wedge he put.

Now

Now from the pan he takes the melted ore,
Into his mould of chalk, while warm, to pour;
Then he in water ſteeps it, and commands
The prieſt to take it thence with eager hands:
The prieſt obey'd—'twas then his ſparkling eyes
Gleam'd with gay rapture, mix'd with ſweet ſurpriſe:
"O! could'ſt thou teach me, friend, to work like thee!
"To my laſt hour," he ſays, "thy ſlave I'd be."
"Once more our work," he anſwers, "we'll repeat,
"Then an adept thyſelf will be complete."
The prieſt his toil renews, the fire he blows,
And round the pan, as erſt, freſh coals he throws:
Meantime the crafty canon in his hand
Holds, as by chance, a ſmall and hollow wand;
This wand an ounce of ſilver duſt contain'd,
Which, clos'd with wax, ſafe in the tube remain'd,
Till, with pretence to aid his buſy friend,
And, as he ſaid, the drooping fire to mend,
With the ſtick's point he ſlyly ſtirs each coal,
Till the bright ore all trickled from the hole.
What could the prieſt, but deep his ſkill confeſs,
When twice confirm'd he ſees their wiſh'd ſucceſs?

Almoſt his ſage inſtructor he adores,
And more importunate again implores,
That he would now his wondrous art unfold,
Nor the great ſecret longer would withhold.
" Not yet," the canon cried; " one trial more
" Shall to thee prove, I've treaſures yet in ſtore.
" Some copper bring." The ready prieſt obeys,
Nor long, impatient grown, in ſearch he ſtays.
That brought, one ounce exact the canon weighs.
Then the old proceſs he again repeats,
And a third time his blinded pupil cheats.
" Now mind thy taſk," he ſays, " and, ſtooping low,
" Be ſure with quicker breath the coals to blow."
The copper, ſoften'd now and ductile grown,
Which had already in the pan been thrown,
Into the mould of chalk, unſeen, he caſt,
Then cried, " Now ceaſe to blow, 'tis done at laſt."
Quick in the water the hot mould he dipp'd,
And, at that moment, from his ſleeve he ſlipp'd
The ſilver wedge, which in the mould he plac'd,
And in its ſtead the copper ſeiz'd in haſte.
" Now, brother prieſt, the water ſearch," he ſaid,
" And ſee if aught our labours hath repaid."

Pleas'd

Pleas'd he obey'd his honour'd lord's command,
And graſp'd the ſilver wedge with eager hand.
" Now," ſays the canon, " fair before your eyes
" Some ſkilful goldſmith ſhall aſſay our prize."
Then to a ſhop they the three wedges bear,
And having each well tried, and prov'd with care,
The workmen pure and good them all declare.
Not gayer hails the lark the opening day,
Nor the ſweet nightingale the breath of May;
Not livelier tranſports conſcious beauties feel,
When at their feet imploring lovers kneel;
Nor keener pants a generous knight for arms,
To prove him worthy of his miſtreſs' charms,
Than did the prieſt, impatient to obtain
The promis'd means ſuch ſecret wealth to gain.
" Tell me what ſum, dear, beſt of friends!" he cries,
" To buy the wondrous ſecret may ſuffice.",
" Dear," ſays the canon, " is the price, I own;
" Yet through the realm to but one friar alone,
" Myſelf except, is the deep ſecret known."
" Be it but mine," he ſays, " is all I pray,
" Then inſtant name the price without delay."

" Not leſs than fifty pounds," was his reply,
" E'en for a friend the coſtly prize may buy:
" But much I'd do for honour'd friendſhip's ſake;
" Therefore from thee I'll only forty take."
The prieſt the money gives; and ere he goes,
The canon ſtrict enjoins, he'd ne'er diſcloſe,
From whom the art he learn'd, to mortal ear,
If aught the ſafety of a friend were dear.
This promiſe made, his leave the canon takes,
And from that day the bubbled prieſt forſakes;
Who ſoon, alas! too clearly to his coſt,
(Firſt having caſh and time and labour loſt)
Found, after many a ſad and ſore defeat,
His friend a ſharper, and his art a cheat.

O potent gold! whoſe ſtern reſiſtleſs ſway
Men of all climes and every age obey!
Thee to increaſe each eager mind employs,
But oft its object the warm wiſh deſtroys;
For ſince this vile philoſophy was known,
Gold ſcarcer now than e'er before is grown.
Yet they who ſtill the fleeting hope purſue,
Who ſtill, though foil'd ſo oft, the chace renew,
Burnt though before, will not of fire beware,
But ruſh determin'd on the ſpecious ſnare.

Theſe

* Theſe queſtions, ſo hiſtorians grave atteſt,
To Plato once a curious youth addreſs'd:
" Tell me, great maſter, by what name is known
" Nature's grand boaſt, this wonder-working ſtone?"
" Firſt take the ſtone that Titanos men name."
" What ſtone is that?" " Magnetia is the ſame."
" Ay," ſays the youth, " good maſter, is it thus?
" This is *ignotum per ignotius.*
" But what's Magnetia?" " 'Tis a water made
" Of the four elements." " Great ſir," he ſaid,
" How to combine their properties explain."
" Youth," he replied, " thy eager hopes are vain:
" Each ſage, to whom was known the art profound,
" Hath Heaven's ſevere decrees to ſilence bound;
" Nor leſs enjoin'd, that no preſumptuous pen
" Reveal the ſecret to the eyes of men!"

* The book alluded to (" Book ſenior" in the original) is printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum*, vol. v. p. 219. under this title—Senioris Zadith ſil. Hamuelis Tabula Chymica. The ſtory which follows of Plato and his diſciple is there told (p. 249), with ſome variations, of Salomon. " Dixit *Salomon* rex, Recipe lapi-" dem qui dicitur *Thitarios*—Dixit ſapiens, Aſſigna mihi illum. " Dixit, eſt corpus *magneſiæ*—Dixit, quid eſt *magneſia?* Re-" ſpondit, *magneſia* eſt *aqua*, compoſita, &c."

TYRWHITT, v. 16918.

May

May all henceforth the vain purſuit give o'er,
Nor longer ſtrive God's ſecrets to explore!
Creature of duſt, ſhall weak and mortal man
The counſels of th' Almighty dare to ſcan?
Science' fair lamp to all his wants benign
Deigns with ſoft luſtre on his paths to ſhine;
But weak no leſs than impious is the pride,
That raſhly hopes to pierce, what Heaven would hide.
Now, ſirs, farewel; may each his ways amend!
At length my tedious ſtory 's at an end.

PRO-

PROLOGUE

TO

THE MANCIPLE'S TALE.

WHAT man of Kent, but knows a little town,
Call'd by this title quaint, Bob-up-and-down?
This we had reach'd, when now our Hoſt eſpied
Looſe in his ſaddle's ſeat the Cook to ride.
"From ill, good Cook," he ſays, "may Heaven thee keep!
"But, by my troth, thou'rt drunk, and faſt aſleep.
"That thou haſt vigils kept, I ſee full clear,
"But not in prayers haſt ſpent the night, I fear.
"Come forth, good maſter Cook, thy feathers ſhake,
"And tell thy tale to keep thyſelf awake!"
Cropſick and pale, "I grieve," the Cook replied,
"That your commands, ſir Hoſt, ſhould be denied:
"And why I know not, but I'd rather ſleep,
"Than drink a gallon of the beſt in Chepe."
"A tale, good Hoſt," the Manciple replied,
"We can't expect from one, who ſcarce can ride;

"But,

" But, if it pleaſe this gallant company,
" I will the place of maſter Cook ſupply.
" O ſorry ſot!" then to the Cook he cries,
" How ſtupid roll thy glaſſy goggling eyes!
" Shame! ſo to love a noiſy drunken feaſt,
" Till from a man thou'rt ſunk beneath a beaſt!"
The Cook, not ſenſeleſs quite to ſuch diſgrace,
Indignant ſtares full in his cenſor's face;
And piqu'd, in public thus to be reprov'd,
His head he nodded, and his lips he mov'd,
And ſomething mutter'd, what, no mortal heard,
For ſpeak he could not now one ſingle word.
But him full dear his angry effort coſt;
For, ſpent with rage, he quite his balance loſt,
And down he fell, and there till now had laid,
Had not good friends come timely to his aid.
Then many a hardy tug was ſpent in vain,
Ere they could right him on his horſe again.
Better 'twere far for cooks to ſtay at home,
Than out on idle pilgrimages roam:
Better it ſuch becomes to wield their ladle,
Than riſk their necks by mounting on a ſaddle.
Then thus our Hoſt the Manciple addreſs'd:-
" That he's paſt tale-telling muſt be confeſs'd;

" But

" But think'ſt thou not, thou'rt ſomewhat too ſevere,
" To chide his frailty thus in public here?
" I've known ſome manciples, not over nice,
" Who in their bills o'ercharg'd the market price.
" Who on ſome future day can tell, but he
" May ſome ſuch naughty tale retort on thee?"
" Faith," ſaid the Manciple, " your hint is juſt,
" And ſoothe his anger, by ſome means, I muſt;
" And I have here the means at hand, I truſt."
Then tow'rds the Cook he went, and in his view
Forth from his pocket he a bottle drew:
" Come, Cook," he ſays, " this will ſet all things right,
" And firm our friendſhip, as before, unite."
The Cook, who grinn'd conſent, but nought replied,
Felt in an inſtant all his rage ſubſide;
Expreſs'd forgiveneſs, with a ſoften'd look,
And cheerful in his hands the bottle took;
Nor with faint zeal the beverage bland he ſips,
But copious draughts he takes, and ſmacks his lips.
" Here," ſaid our Hoſt, " we ſee what powers divine
" Heaven's gracious boon hath given to potent wine;
" Med'cine ſupreme! ordain'd each wound to heal,
" With ſoft oblivion o'er each grief to ſteal:

" Form'd

" Form'd the dark gloom of envy to aſſuage,
" Or calm the furious burſts of vengeful rage!
" What thanks to thee, great Bacchus, mortals owe!
" Source of each joy, and balm of ev'ry woe!
" But 'tis to thee, good Manciple, we look,
" To fill the poſt, reſign'd by maſter Cook."

THE

THE

MANCIPLE'S TALE.

OF yore Dan Phœbus liv'd on earth below,
Fam'd for his ſkill to ſtretch the ſounding bow;
Sure to its point th' unerring ſhaft he drew,
And the fierce ſerpent deadly Python ſlew;
And hence, in honour of the hardy deed,
The bow e'en now he bears, fair conqueſt's meed.
Yet not renown'd for archery alone,
Each ſofter ſcience was alike his own;
To him ſweet muſic's magic powers belong,
Father of heavenly harmony and ſong!
Nature's choice gifts he, theſe beſides, poſſeſs'd,
The faireſt, comelieſt youth by all confeſs'd:
Gentle in manners, graceful in his mien,
Wide round the world his equal ne'er was ſeen.
Long while, immur'd within a ſplendid cage,
Did a fam'd crow his vacant hours engage;
Him ſoon he taught to catch each note he heard;
He nicely mimick'd each harmonious bird.

Oft

Oft he provok'd, beneath the neighbouring grove,
The tender Philomel to own her love:
So true he ſung, e'en her his notes deceiv'd,
And her fond partner him ſhe oft believ'd:
Nor ſylvan ſongs alone his voice could reach,
But all the various forms of human ſpeech.

A wife young Phœbus had, he dearly lov'd,
And one, whom early choice had long approv'd:
Yet, though complete he every wiſh poſſeſs'd,
Still rankling jealouſy diſturb'd his breaſt.
Deep in his ſoul was fix'd a mortal dread
Of the fair ſhoots, that branch on many a head:
Strictly he hence forbade, ſhe e'er ſhould roam,
And thought no dangers could ariſe at home.
But, ah! how vain! a pure and ſpotleſs ſoul
Needs not unjuſt ſuſpicion's harſh controul;
And the gay wife, who rolls the melting eye,
E'en bars, and bolts, and padlocks may defy.

Phœbus now practis'd each endearing art,
And ſtudious play'd the tendereſt lover's part;
And hop'd, by gilding bright her hated chain,
Th' unrivall'd maſter of her heart to reign.
But vain is force or fondneſs to controul
The ſovereign favourite bent, that rules the ſoul.

Take

Take e'en the gayeſt ſongſter of the grove,
And practiſe every art to win his love;
If once a cage his roving flight confine,
Fill'd though with plenty, though with gold it ſhine,
Still for his native wilds he will repine:
Or take a cat, and foſter her with milk
And tendereſt meats, and make her couch of ſilk,
And let her ſee a mouſe pop by the wall,
Couch ſhe forgets, and milk, and meats, and all,
And every dainty of the lordlieſt houſe
She leaves untouch'd, unheeded, for a mouſe.

Thus on his wife, accuſtom'd long to rove,
No change could Phœbus work with all his love:
Long had ſhe had unknown a favourite ſwain,
Uncouth in manners, and in perſon plain:
Wonder thou would'ſt, did once thou Phœbus ſee,
How much unlike in every point was he;
Hyperion to a Satyr, when compar'd;
Yet he her ſoul's affections more than ſhar'd.

Phœbus one day from home on buſineſs went,
When pleas'd ſhe inſtant for her Leman ſent.
Harſh is the term, and a faſtidious ear
May think perhaps th' expreſſion too ſevere:

But truth's ſtrict mandates varniſh'd words diſdain,
Pure are her motives, and her language plain.
Wiſe Plato ſaith (as he, who liſts, may read)
"The word ſhould ever well befit the deed."
If to your ſenſes aught I aim to bring,
I or muſt clear deſcribe, or name the thing.
To me what boots it, who plain truth revere,
Whether my words to ſome too home appear?
Whoredom is ſinful, and is ſtill the ſame,
Whoe'er the ſinner, and how great her name.
When in mean life a poor defenceleſs maid
Falls, by a practis'd villain's art betray'd,
Driven from the ſhelter of her native home,
Forc'd for precarious ſuſtenance to roam,
Not one kind friend can the ſad victim find,
By all to hopeleſs infamy conſign'd.
But when unfaithful proves a courtly dame,
Inſtant her crime aſſumes a gentler name;
'Tis ſoft attachment, and a venial flame.

But to my tale—Their guilt to all unknown,
The lovers hop'd and thought themſelves alone;
While from his cage, ſuſpended high, the bird
Each guilty ſigh and every whiſper heard.

Nought

Nought then he ſaid, though ſhame his boſom burn'd;
But when his honour'd maſter home return'd,
With generous rage he ſtretch'd his ſwelling throat,
And cuckoo, cuckoo, was his only note.
Whence this new ſong? his maſter ſoon enquir'd,
And heard in anſwer more than he deſir'd;
Nought, like a faithful friend, the crow conceal'd,
But all he heard, and all he ſaw reveal'd.

Phœbus to floods of ceaſeleſs tears gives way,
To ſorrow's ſharpeſt pangs the mournful prey;
But vengeful rage to ſorrow ſoon ſucceeds;
His bow he bends, and the adultreſs bleeds.
Vengeance now ſated, all his love returns,
Again his heart with wonted fondneſs burns;
But her, whoſe charms his every thought engage,
Lifeleſs he views, the victim of his rage.
Now direr ſorrow all his ſoul poſſeſs'd,
And chas'd each ray of comfort from his breaſt:
Whate'er before could ſoft delight beſtow,
Now ſhades with deeper gloom his hopeleſs woe;
His lyre, his lute, each inſtrument of joy,
E'en his fam'd bow his frantic hands deſtroy;
And laſt, ſad tale, dragg'd fiercely from his cage,
Thus on his long lov'd bird he vents his rage.

"O! traitor

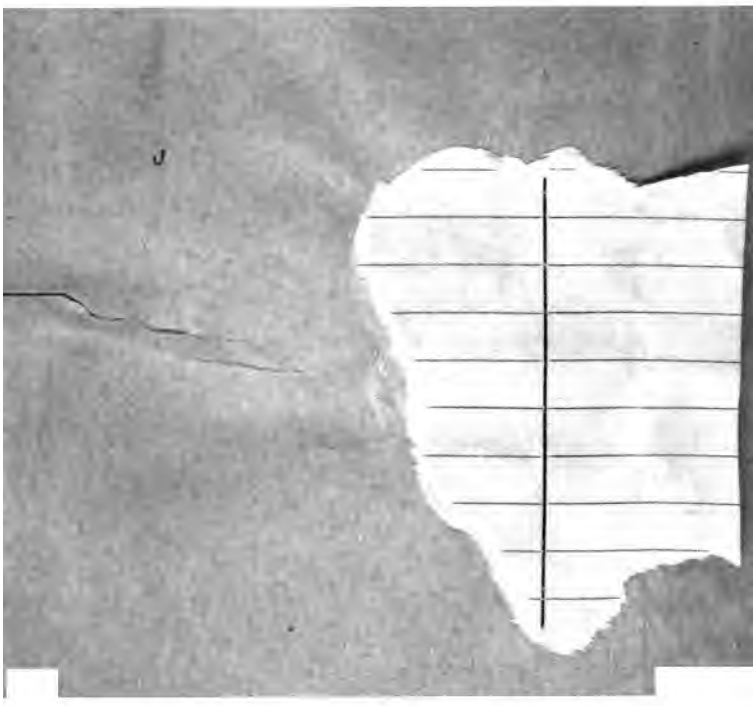
" O! traitor vile! the cauſe of all my grief,
" Woes beyond hope, and ſorrows paſt relief!
" O! monſter! thus thy maſter to deceive!
" O! fool! a tale ſo groundleſs to believe!
" O! wife! moſt juſtly to my ſoul ſo dear!
" How doſt thou now all wan and pale appear!
" Dark are thoſe eyes, that fill'd my heart with glee,
" Of ſenſe bereft, and, ah! bereft by me!
" But thee, vile ſcorpion! juſt rewards await;
" Hear then thy fix'd, irrevocable fate.
" Henceforth no more ſhall thy melodious voice
" The liſtening tenants of the woods rejoice;
" Rival no more of the ſweet bird of night,
" Shall thy ſoft ſongs the melting groves delight;
" But, preſage dire of tempeſt and of rain,
" With harſh diſcordant croak ſhalt thou complain.
" Thy plumes, whoſe whiteneſs ſham'd the driven ſnow,
" Henceforth ſhall all their envied charms forego,
" Dark as thy ſoul, and mournful as my woe."
He ſpake, and inſtant midnight's pitchy gloom
Spread its dark mantle o'er each milky plume;
And, by relentleſs Phœbus' anger ſtain'd,
The race of crows have black e'er ſince remain'd.

Take

Take heed, by this example, all, I pray,
Of whom ye chance to ſpeak, and what ye ſay:
Nor ever tell a friend through all your life,
Though ſome kind neighbour ſhould admire his wife.
Truſt me, your forward zeal will ſure offend,
And all your friendſhip will in hatred end:
For thus ſaith Solomon, "Thy lips reſtrain,
"Raſh words thou oft may'ſt wiſh recall'd in vain."
Oft on my youthful mind my ancient dame
In many a lecture grave impreſs'd the ſame;
"Nature," ſhe ſaid, "with mark'd and ſpecial care,
"How we ſpeak raſhly, hath bid all beware.
"The tongue, that ſlender inſtrument of ſound,
"She with a wall of teeth hath fenc'd around.
"O! who may tell what deeds of mortal woe,
"From looſe, unguarded ſpeech each moment flow?
"Keep well thy tongue," ſhe ſaid, "its zeal reſtrain,
"Or as a ſword 'twill friendſhip cut in twain:
"Think what dire ills from thoughtleſs words enſue,
"Nor tales unpleaſing bring, or falſe or true:
"Where'er thy lot, whether 'mong high or low,
"Keep well thy tongue, and think upon the crow."

THE END.

ERRATA.

VOL. III.

P. 159, l. 8, for *drank* read *drunk*.
282, l. 5, for *ſtrive* read *ſtrife*.
286, l. 3, for *invent* read *invert*.
291, l. 5, for *mingled* read *mangled*.
327, l. 3 from the bottom, in *above* dele *a*, and read *'bove*.
—— l. 6 from the bottom, for *as in* read *as is*.
339, l. laſt, for *love* read *lore*.